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VOL. VI.—SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

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# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

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Πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν.—ST. PAUL

The whole drift of the Scripture of God, what is it but to teach Theology? Theology, what is it but the Science of things divine? What Science can be attained unto without the help of natural Discourse and Reason?—HOOKER

---

BY

JOHN MILEY, D.D., LL.D.

*Professor of Systematic Theology in Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey*

---

VOLUME II

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

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## PART IV.—CHRISTOLOGY.

---

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

<b>I. Construction of the Doctrine.</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. Importance of a True Doctrine.....	4
2. Early Need of Doctrinal Construction.....	5
3. Formula of the Council of Chalcedon.....	6
<b>II. Elements of the Doctrine.</b>	
1. The Divine Nature of Christ.....	10
2. The Human Nature of Christ.....	10
3. The Personal Oneness of Christ.....	12

### CHAPTER II.

#### THE DIVINE INCARNATION.

<b>I. Doctrine of the Incarnation.</b>	
1. Ground of the Person of Christ.....	14
2. The Incarnation a Truth of Scripture.....	14
3. Incarnation of the Personal Son.....	17
<b>II. The Two Natures in Personal Oneness.</b>	
1. The Result of the Incarnation.....	18
2. The Catholic Doctrine.....	18
3. Mystery of the Doctrine.....	19

### CHAPTER III.

#### CHRIST IS THEANTHROPIC.

<b>I. Theanthropic in Personality.</b>	
1. Permanent Duality of His Natures.....	23
2. Communion of Attributes in His Personality.....	24
3. Truth of a Theanthropic Personality.....	24
4. A Necessity to the Atonement.....	26
<b>II. The Interpretation of Christological Facts.</b>	
1. Facts of Divinity Ascribed to Christ.....	27
2. Facts of Humanity Ascribed to Christ.....	27
3. Divine Facts Ascribed to Christ as Human.....	28
4. Human Facts Ascribed to Christ as Divine.....	28

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE SYMPATHY OF CHRIST.

	PAGE
<b>I. Sympathy through Common Suffering.</b>	
1. A True and Deep Law of Sympathy.....	30
2. Law of the Sympathy of Christ.....	31
3. The Law Appropriated in the Incarnation.....	31
4. Thorough Appropriation of the Law.....	32
<b>II. The Consciousness of Christ in Suffering.</b>	
1. Deeper than a Human Consciousness.....	36
2. Else, only a Human Sympathy.....	36
3. An Utterly Insufficient Sympathy.....	36
<b>III. Suffering in a Theanthropic Consciousness.</b>	
1. Concerning a Human Consciousness of the Divine.....	38
2. Divine Consciousness of the Human.....	39
3. A Possibility of the Divine Consciousness.....	40
4. Real Ground of the Sympathy of Christ.....	42
5. Light on the Person of Christ.....	43

## CHAPTER V.

## LEADING ERRORS IN CHRISTOLOGY.

<b>I. Earlier Errors.</b>	
1. Ebionism.....	45
2. Gnosticism.....	46
3. Arianism.....	48
4. Apollinarianism.....	49
5. Nestorianism.....	51
6. Eutychianism.....	52
<b>II. Later Errors.</b>	
1. The Socinian Christology.....	54
2. The Lutheran Christology.....	55
3. The Kenotic Christology.....	59

---

**PART V.—SOTERIOLOGY.**
*THE ATONEMENT IN CHRIST.*

## PRELIMINARIES.

1. Soteriology.....	65
2. Atonement as Fact and Doctrine.....	65
3. Relation of the Doctrine to other Doctrines.....	66
4. Definition of the Atonement.....	68

## CHAPTER I.

## REALITY OF ATONEMENT.

<b>I. Witnessing Facts.</b>	
1. A Message of Salvation.....	70
2. The Salvation in Christ.....	70



# CONTENTS.

vii

	PAGE
3. Salvation in His Suffering.....	71
4. His Redeeming Death Necessary.....	71
5. Only Explanation of His Suffering.....	72
6. Necessity of Faith to Salvation.....	72
7. Priesthood and Sacrifice.....	74
8. Christ a Unique Saviour.....	77
<b>II. Witnessing Terms.</b>	
1. Atonement.....	79
2. Reconciliation.....	81
3. Propitiation.....	83
4. Redemption.....	84
5. Substitution.....	87

## CHAPTER II.

### NECESSITY FOR ATONEMENT.

<b>I. Ground of Necessity in Moral Government.</b>	
1. Fact of a Moral Government.....	90
2. Requisites of a Moral Government.....	90
3. Divine Determination of Rewards.....	92
4. Measure of Penalty.....	92
<b>II. Necessity for Penalty.</b>	
1. From its Rectoral Office.....	94
2. From the Divine Holiness.....	94
3. From the Divine Goodness.....	95
4. A Real Necessity for Atonement.....	95
5. Nature of the Atonement Indicated.....	95

## CHAPTER III.

### SCHEMES WITHOUT ATONEMENT.

<b>I. Blessedness After the Penalty.</b>	
1. Salvation Excluded.....	97
2. Final Blessedness Really a Salvation.....	98
3. Impossible under Endless Penalty.....	98
<b>II. Salvation through Sovereign Forgiveness.</b>	
1. An Assumption Against Facts.....	98
2. Contrary to Divine Government.....	99
3. Subversive of All Government.....	99
<b>III. Forgiveness on Repentance.</b>	
1. Repentance Necessary.....	100
2. The Only Kind Naturally Possible.....	100
3. Such Repentance Inevitable.....	101
4. Without any Deep Sense of Sin.....	101
5. True Repentance Only by Grace.....	101
<b>IV. Some Special Facts.</b>	
1. Forgiving One Another.....	102
2. Parental Forgiveness.....	103
3. Parable of the Prodigal Son.....	103

## CHAPTER IV.

## THEORIES OF ATONEMENT.

I. Preliminaries.	PAGE
1. Earlier Views of Atonement.....	106
2. Inception of a Scientific Treatment.....	107
3. Popular Number of Theories.....	109
4. Scientific Enumeration.....	109
5. Ground for Only Two Theories.....	112
II. Summary Reviews.	
1. Theory of Vicarious Repentance.....	113
2. Theory of Redemption by Love.....	114
3. Theory of Self-prostitution by Self-sacrifice.....	115
4. Realistic Theory.....	119
5. Mystical Theory.....	119
6. Middle Theory.....	120
7. Theory of Conditional Penal Substitution.....	121
8. Leading Theories.....	123

## CHAPTER V.

## THEORY OF MORAL INFLUENCE.

I. Facts of the Theory.	
1. The Redemptive Law.....	125
2. Socinian.....	126
3. Its Dialectics.....	126
4. Truth of Moral Influence.....	127
II. Its Refutation.	
1. By the Fact of an Atonement.....	129
2. By its Necessity.....	131
3. By the Peculiar Saving Work of Christ.....	131
4. Not a Theory of Atonement.....	132

## CHAPTER VI.

## THEORY OF SATISFACTION.

I. Preliminaries.	
1. Position in Doctrinal Faith.....	133
2. Formation of the Doctrine.....	133
3. Two Factors of the Atonement.....	134
4. Concerned with the Penal Substitution.....	135
II. Elements of the Theory.	
1. Satisfaction of Justice in Punishment.....	135
2. Through Penal Substitution.....	136
3. Three Forms of the Substitution.....	136
4. An Absolute Substitution.....	137
III. Justice and Atonement.	
1. Their Intimate Relation.....	138
2. Distinctions of Justice.....	139
3. Punitive Justice and Satisfaction.....	139

<b>IV. Principles of the Theory.</b>	PAGE
1. The Demerit of Sin.....	140
2. A Divine Punitive Justice.....	140
3. Sin Ought to be Punished.....	141
4. Penal Satisfaction a Necessity of Justice.....	141
<b>V. The Satisfaction Impossible by Substitution.</b>	
1. The Satisfaction Necessary.....	143
2. The Substitution Maintained.....	144
3. No Answer to the Necessity.....	145
4. No Such Answer Possible.....	147
5. The Theory Self-destructive.....	148
<b>VI. Facts of the Theory in Objection.</b>	
1. The Punishment of Christ.....	148
2. Redeemed Sinners Without Guilt.....	149
3. A Limited Atonement.....	153
4. Element of Commutative Justice.....	153

CHAPTER VII.

GOVERNMENTAL THEORY.

<b>I. Preliminary Facts.</b>	
1. Substitutional Atonement.....	155
2. Conditional Substitution.....	156
3. Substitution in Suffering.....	156
4. The Grotian Theory.....	159
5. The Consistent Arminian Theory.....	165
<b>II. Public Justice.</b>	
1. Relation of Public Justice to Atonement.....	169
2. Public Justice One with Divine Justice.....	170
3. One with Distributive Justice.....	170
4. Ground of its Penalties.....	171
5. End of its Penalties.....	172
6. Remissibility of its Penalties.....	175
7. Place for Atonement.....	176
8. Nature of the Atonement Determined.....	176
<b>III. Theory and Necessity for Atonement.</b>	
1. An Answer to the Real Necessity.....	176
2. Grounded in the Deepest Necessity.....	177
3. Rectoral Value of Penalty.....	178
4. Rectoral Value of Atonement.....	180
5. Only Sufficient Atonement.....	183
6. True Sense of Satisfaction.....	184
<b>IV. Theory and Scripture Interpretation.</b>	
1. Terms of Divine Wrath.....	184
2. Terms of Divine Righteousness.....	186
3. Terms of Atonement.....	186
4. Terms of Atoning Suffering.....	187

<b>V. Theory and Scripture Facts.</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. Guilt of Redeemed Sinners.....	190
2. Forgiveness in Justification.....	192
3. Grace in Forgiveness.....	192
4. Universality of Atonement.....	193
5. Universal Overture of Grace.....	193
6. Doctrinal Result.....	194

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SUFFICIENCY OF THE ATONEMENT.

<b>I. The Holiness of Christ.</b>	
1. A Necessary Element.....	195
2. Scripture View.....	195
<b>II. His Greatness.</b>	
1. An Element of Atoning Value.....	196
2. An Infinite Value in Christ.....	196
<b>III. His Voluntariness.</b>	
1. A Necessary Fact.....	196
2. Christ a Voluntary Substitute.....	196
3. The Atoning Value.....	197
<b>IV. His Divine Sonship.</b>	
1. Sense of Atoning Value.....	197
2. Measure of Value.....	198
<b>V. His Human Brotherhood.</b>	
1. Mediation must Express an Interest.....	199
2. The Principle in Atonement.....	199
<b>VI. His Suffering.</b>	
1. Extreme Views.....	200
2. A Necessary Element.....	200
3. An Infinite Sufficiency.....	201

## CHAPTER IX.

### OBJECTIONS TO THE ATONEMENT.

<b>I. An Irrational Scheme.</b>	
1. A Pretentious Assumption.....	203
2. Analogies of Providence a Vindication.....	203
<b>II. A Violation of Justice.</b>	
1. No Infringement of Rights.....	204
2. Analogy of Vicarious Suffering.....	204
3. The Atonement Clear of Injustice.....	204
4. Vantage-ground against the Moral Theory.....	205
<b>III. A Releasement from Duty.</b>	
1. Fatal, if Valid.....	205
2. Nugatory against the True Doctrine.....	206

CONTENTS.

xi

<b>IV. An Aspersions of Divine Goodness.</b>	PAGE
1. Reason of Law and Penalty.....	206
2. No Aspersions of Divine Goodness.....	207
3. Divine Love Magnified.....	207

CHAPTER X.

A LESSON FOR ALL INTELLIGENCES.

<b>I. Relations of the Atonement.</b>	
1. A Salvation for Man Only.....	208
2. Broader Relation to Moral Beings.....	208
3. A Practical Lesson for All.....	209
<b>II. A Lesson of Universal Interest.</b>	
1. Higher Orders Interested in Redemption.....	210
2. Meaning of the Lordship of Christ.....	211
3. Moral Grandeur of the Atonement.....	214

CHAPTER XI.

UNIVERSALITY OF THE ATONEMENT.

<b>I. Determining Law of Extent.</b>	
1. Intrinsic Sufficiency for All.....	218
2. Divine Destination Determinative of Extent.....	219
3. The True Inquiry.....	221
<b>II. Pleasure of the Father.</b>	
1. Question of His Sovereignty.....	222
2. In One Relation to All.....	223
3. All in a Common State of Evil.....	223
4. Voice of the Divine Perfections.....	223
<b>III. Pleasure of the Son.</b>	
1. Application of Preceding Facts.....	225
2. Atoning Work the Same.....	225
3. A Question of His Love.....	225
<b>IV. Scripture Testimony.</b>	
1. Proof-texts for Limitation.....	226
2. Proof-texts for Universality.....	227
3. Redemption in Extent of the Evil of Sin.....	228
4. Testimony of the Great Commission.....	229
<b>V. Fallacies in Defense of Limitation.</b>	
1. Facts Admitted.....	232
2. Inconsistent with the Divine Sincerity.....	232
3. Sufficiency of Atonement in Vindication.....	232
4. True Sense of Sufficiency.....	233
5. Sufficiency only with Divine Destination.....	233
6. Limited in the Scheme of Satisfaction.....	234
7. Assumption of Only a Seeming Inconsistency.....	237
8. Mixed State of Elect and Non-elect.....	238
9. Distinction of Secret and Preceptive Divine Will.....	239

*THE SALVATION IN CHRIST.*

## CHAPTER I.

## BENEFITS OF THE ATONEMENT.

I. Immediate Benefits.	PAGE
1. The Present Life.....	242
2. Gracious Help for All .....	245
3. Capacity for Probation.....	246
4. Infant Salvation.....	247
II. Conditional Benefits.	
1. Meaning of Conditional Benefits .....	248
2. The Conditionality of Salvation.....	249
3. The Great Facts of Salvation Severally Conditional.....	252

## CHAPTER II.

## DOCTRINAL ISSUES.

I. Doctrine of Predestination.	
1. Divine Decrees.....	254
2. Predestination.....	260
3. Election.....	260
4. Reprobation .....	263
II. Other Points in Issue.	
1. Limitation of the Atonement.....	266
2. Moral Necessity.....	266
3. Irresistibility of Saving Grace.....	267
4. Absolute Final Perseverance .....	268

## CHAPTER III.

## FREE AGENCY.

I. The Freedom in Question.	
1. Not the Freedom of Things.....	271
2. Not the Freedom of External Action.....	271
3. Not the Freedom of the Will.....	272
4. The True Question of Freedom.....	273
5. Importance of the Question.....	274
6. Theoretical Forms of Necessity.....	275
II. On the Domination of Motive.	
1. Choice as the Stronger Motive.....	277
2. Ascertainment of the Stronger Motive.....	278
3. Necessity in Motive Domination.....	278
4. A Law of Universal Necessity.....	279
III. On Choosing as We Please.	
1. As a Formula of Freedom.....	280
2. A Nullity for Freedom.....	281
3. Consistent with Determining Inclination.....	281
4. Indifferent whence or what the Inclination.....	282

CONTENTS.

xiii

<b>IV. Mental Facts of Choice.</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. Freedom of Choice a Question of Psychology.....	283
2. Need of All the Mental Facts.....	284
3. Deficiency of the Usual Analysis.....	284
4. The Facts in a Complete Analysis.....	286
5. The Facts Conclusive of Freedom.....	287

CHAPTER IV.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE.

<b>I. Rationality of Choice.</b>	
1. Motive and Choice.....	288
2. Rational Character of Choice.....	289
3. Rational Conduct of Life.....	289
<b>II. Rational Suspension of Choice.</b>	
1. Meaning of Rational Suspension.....	291
2. Omissions of the Suspension.....	291
3. Power of Suspension Manifest.....	292
4. Only Account of Noble Lives.....	292
<b>III. Immediate Power of Suspension.</b>	
1. Denial of the Power.....	293
2. A Denial of Personal Agency.....	294
3. Suspension of Choice not Choice.....	295
4. The Immediate Power Manifest.....	295
<b>IV. Power over Motives.</b>	
1. Motive States of Mind.....	297
2. Laws of Motive States.....	297
3. Power over the Laws of Motive States.....	298
4. Power over Motives.....	301
<b>V. Sufficient Motives for Required Choices.</b>	
1. Objective Motives.....	303
2. Rational Motives.....	303
3. Moral and Religious Motives.....	303
4. Power of Commanding the Requisite Motives.....	304
5. True Freedom of Choice.....	306

CHAPTER V.

JUSTIFICATION.

<b>I. The Nature of Justification.</b>	
1. Terminology of the Subject.....	309
2. Forensic View of Justification.....	309
3. The Vital Fact of Forgiveness.....	310
4. The Use of Forensic Terms.....	311
5. A Change of Legal Status.....	312

	PAGE
<b>II. The Ground of Justification.</b>	
1. In Socinianism.....	313
2. In Romanism.....	313
3. In Calvinism.....	314
4. In Arminianism.....	317
5. Justification Purely of Grace.....	318
<b>III. The Condition of Justification.</b>	
1. Faith the One Condition.....	318
2. The Imputation of Faith for Righteousness.....	319
3. Faith in Christ the Condition.....	320
4. Nature of the Faith.....	321
5. Harmony of Paul and James.....	324
 <b>CHAPTER VI.</b>  	
REGENERATION.	
<b>I. The Nature of Regeneration.</b>	
1. In the Light of the Scriptures.....	327
2. Representative Terms.....	329
3. Analogical Interpretation.....	329
4. Deeper Principle of Interpretation.....	330
5. Other Forms of Presentation.....	331
6. The New Life.....	332
<b>II. The Work of the Holy Spirit.</b>	
1. Testimony of the Scriptures.....	333
2. Immediate Agency of the Spirit.....	334
3. The Only Efficient Agency.....	334
<b>III. Regeneration and Sonship.</b>	
1. Regeneration the Ground of Sonship.....	337
2. Adoption and Sonship.....	337
3. The Heritage of Blessings.....	338
 <b>CHAPTER VII.</b>  	
ASSURANCE.	
<b>I. The Doctrine.</b>	
1. Meaning of Assurance.....	339
2. Truth of Assurance.....	340
3. Sources of Assurance.....	341
<b>II. Witness of the Spirit.</b>	
1. A Distinct Witness.....	342
2. A Direct Witness.....	344
3. Manner of the Witnessing.....	347
<b>III. Witness of Our Own Spirit.</b>	
1. Nature of the Testimony.....	348
2. Illustrations of the Witnessing.....	348
3. Process of the Witnessing.....	350



## CONTENTS.

xv

IV. The Assurance Given.	PAGE
1. Subjectively One.....	350
2. Variable in Degree.....	351
3. Thoroughly Valid.....	352

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SANCTIFICATION.

<b>I. Meaning of Sanctification.</b>	
1. Ceremonial Sanctification.....	355
2. Deeper Moral Sense.....	356
3. Entire Sanctification.....	356
4. Two Spheres of the Sanctification.....	357
<b>II. Sanctification of the Nature.</b>	
1. Incomplete in Regeneration.....	357
2. Completion in Sanctification.....	362
3. Concerning Sin in the Regenerate.....	366
4. The Second-Blessing View.....	368
<b>III. The Life in Holiness.</b>	
1. Portraiture of the Life.....	372
2. Grades in Graces.....	377
3. Law of Perfection in Graces.....	377
4. The Assurance of Sanctification.....	379
5. Sanctification a Common Privilege.....	382

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE CHURCH.

<b>I. The Church and Means of Grace.</b>	
1. Idea of the Church.....	385
2. Duty of Church Membership.....	388
3. Means of Grace.....	389
4. The Sacraments.....	392
<b>II. Christian Baptism.</b>	
1. Meaning of the Rite.....	395
2. Mode of Administration.....	396
3. The Subjects of Baptism.....	404
<b>III. The Lord's Supper.</b>	
1. Institution of the Supper.....	411
2. Nature of the Supper.....	411
3. Factitious Sacraments.....	414
<b>IV. Constitution of the Church.</b>	
1. Laity and Ministry.....	415
2. Divine Vocation of the Ministry.....	415
3. Ecclesiastical Polity.....	416

## PART VI.—ESCHATOLOGY.

## CHAPTER I.

## FUTURE EXISTENCE.

<b>I. The Spirituality of Mind.</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. Falsity of Materialism.....	423
2. Truth of Spirituality.....	425
3. The View of Scripture.....	426
<b>II. The Immortality of Mind.</b>	
1. Spirituality as Proof of Immortality.....	426
2. A Question of the Divine Purpose.....	427
3. Evidences of the Divine Purpose.....	427

## CHAPTER II.

## THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

<b>I. Question of an Intermediate Place.</b>	
1. In the View of the Scriptures.....	430
2. In the Faith of the Church.....	431
<b>II. A State of Conscious Existence.</b>	
1. The Common Christian Faith.....	432
2. The Clear Sense of Scripture.....	432
3. Review of Objections.....	434
<b>III. Not a Probationary State.</b>	
1. Significant Silence of Scripture.....	435
2. Clear Sense of Scripture.....	435
3. The Question Respecting the Heathen.....	436
4. Not a Purgatorial State.....	438

## CHAPTER III.

## THE SECOND ADVENT.

<b>I. Doctrine of the Advent.</b>	
1. A Personal, Visible Coming of Christ.....	440
2. Theory of a Merely Figurative Sense.....	441
3. The Premillennial Theory.....	443
<b>II. The Advent in the Light of its Concomitants.</b>	
1. The General Resurrection.....	443
2. The Final Judgment.....	444
3. The End of the World.....	445

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE RESURRECTION.

<b>I. Doctrine of the Resurrection.</b>	
1. The Sense of the Scriptures.....	448
2. Speculative Theories.....	452
3. The Resurrection Body.....	453

CONTENTS.

xvii

II. Credibility of the Resurrection.	PAGE
1. A Divinely Purposed Futurity.....	454
2. Within the Plan of Redemption.....	454
3. Apparent Difficulties of the Doctrine.....	454
III. Oneness of the Resurrection.	
1. Theories of Distinct Resurrections.....	455
2. Proof of the Oneness.....	456

CHAPTER V.

THE JUDGMENT.

I. A Future Judgment.	
1. Explicit Words of Scripture.....	458
2. Judgment after the Resurrection.....	459
II. A General Judgment.	
1. The Scripture Proof.....	459
2. Manner of the Judgment.....	461

CHAPTER VI.

FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

I. Rational Proofs.	
1. Reality of a Moral Government.....	462
2. Under a Law of Equity.....	462
3. Present Omissions of the Law.....	462
4. Requirement of Future Punishment.....	465
II. Scripture Proofs.	
1. Final Neglect of Salvation.....	465
2. Fact of Dying in Sin.....	465
3. Future Happiness only for the Righteous.....	466
4. Contemporary Doom of the Wicked.....	466
5. Punishment at the Final Advent.....	466
6. Resurrection to a Penal Doom.....	467
7. Final Judgment of Condemnation.....	467
III. Eternity of Punishment.	
1. Recoil from the Doctrine.....	467
2. Fruitless Endeavor Toward a Rationale.....	468
3. Purely a Question of Revelation.....	469
4. Obvious Sense of Scripture.....	469

CHAPTER VII.

FUTURE BLESSEDNESS.

I. Heaven a Place.	
1. Sense of Place.....	472
2. Localism of Spiritual Beings.....	472
3. Requirement of the Resurrection.....	472
4. Pervasive Sense of Scripture.....	473
5. Location of Heaven.....	473

<b>II. The Blessedness of Heaven.</b>	PAGE
1. Beauty of the Place .....	474
2. Elements of Blessedness .....	474

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## APPENDICES.

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### I.

#### INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

<b>I. Threefold Operation of the Spirit.</b>	
1. Illumination of the Mediate Agent .....	481
2. Communication of the Truth .....	481
3. Agency in the Publication .....	482
4. Inspiration as the Requirement .....	482
<b>II. Erroneous Theories of Inspiration.</b>	
1. Inspiration of Genius .....	488
2. Special Religious Consciousness .....	488
3. Illumination and Elevation .....	488
4. Divine Superintendence .....	488
5. The Mechanical Theory .....	484
<b>III. The Dynamical Theory.</b>	
1. Sense of the Theory .....	486
2. Place for the Human Element .....	486
3. Clear of Serious Difficulty .....	486
4. Sufficient for a Revelation .....	486
<b>IV. Inspiration and the Scriptures.</b>	
1. Fact of Inspiration from the Scriptures .....	487
2. Not a Credential of the Sacred Writers .....	487
3. Verification of Inspiration .....	487
4. A Rationally Credible Fact .....	488
5. Value of Inspiration .....	488

### II.

#### THE ANGELS.

<b>I. Concerning the Angels.</b>	
1. Realities of Existence .....	490
2. Of a Spiritual Nature .....	491
3. With Personal Endowments .....	491
4. Grade of their Powers .....	492
5. All Originally Holy .....	492
<b>II. The Good Angels.</b>	
1. A Great Multitude .....	493
2. Ever Loyal to God and Duty .....	493
3. In Social and Organic Compact .....	493
4. Ministry of the Good Angels .....	494

CONTENTS.

xix

<b>III. The Evil Angels.</b>	PAGE
1. Evil by Apostasy.....	479
2. The Evil One.....	497
3. Demoniacal Possession.....	499
4. Work of the Devil and his Angels.....	502
5. Final Overthrow.....	504

III.

ARMINIAN TREATMENT OF ORIGINAL SIN.

<b>I. The Question in Arminianism.</b>	
1. A Common Adamic Sin.....	505
2. A Common Justification in Christ.....	512
3. Denial of Concession to Calvinism.....	515
<b>II. The Issue with Calvinism.</b>	
1. Underlying Principle of the Issue.....	517
2. Real Point of the Issue.....	517
3. Arminian Treatment of the Issue.....	517
4. Doctrinal Confusion and Contradiction.....	520
<b>INDEX.....</b>	525



PART IV.  

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CHRISTOLOGY.





## CHRISTOLOGY.

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CHRISTOLOGY—Χριστοῦ λόγος—has Christ for its subject, and might properly include his divinity and subsistence in the Trinity; his incarnation and unique personality; his prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices. Such truths are central to Christianity, and determinative of what it is in itself, and in distinction from other religions. Their inclusion in Christology would give to it a very wide scope. Then, in addition to the range of its own legitimate topics, the subject is greatly broadened in its doctrinal history. Few questions in theology have been more persistently or deeply discussed. The fact is quite natural to the intrinsic importance of the subject. Besides, the discussion has been intensified by the divergences of doctrinal views of the Christ.

For the present, however, we are specially concerned with the one question of the person of Christ. This does not mean the omission of other great topics of Christology. They must be included in a system of Christian theology because they involve fundamental truths of the system. Some of them are inseparably connected with the question of the person of Christ, but may be more appropriately discussed in other parts of the system. The question of personality is itself a subject of wide scope. It is such in the range of its own topics, and also in its doctrinal history. It is the one question of Christology which has been most in discussion. Opposing views have been maintained; and the issues thus raised have been regarded, not as matters of merely speculative interest, but as questions of the profoundest religious concern. The result is that the theories and discussions respecting the person of Christ occupy a large place in the history of Christian doctrine. Any one who wishes to study these discussions can readily find ample resources in the literature which they have produced, particularly in Dorner's great work on the development of the history of the doctrine of the person of Christ. However, systematic theology is concerned with this history only so far as it may be helpful in reaching the true doctrine.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

## I. CONSTRUCTION OF THE DOCTRINE.

1. *Importance of a True Doctrine.*—The doctrine of the person of Christ is not a question of mere speculative interest, but one that vitally concerns the central realities of Christianity itself. No other religion is related to its founder as Christianity is related to Christ. Buddhism is related to Buddha simply as the original of its doctrines and cultus. They derive no intrinsic worth from him, and would be the very same in value if originated by any other man. The same is true of Confucianism and Mohammedanism, and of every other religion of human origin. Even in the instance of men divinely commissioned and inspired for the communication of religious truth and the institution of forms of worship, nothing in themselves gives intrinsic worth to either the truth so communicated or the religious service so instituted. So thoroughly is this true that, in the providence of God, other men might have replaced Moses and Aaron, David and Isaiah, Peter and Paul, without any intrinsic change in either Judaism or Christianity. It could not be so respecting Christ. Without him Christianity could not be what it is. No man could have taken his place. He so wrought himself into Christianity that what he is must determine what it is. It follows that the doctrinal view of the person of Christ must determine the view of Christianity itself.

The history of doctrinal opinions respecting the person of Christ witnesses to the importance of a true doctrine. Indeed, without the details of history this importance is clearly manifest in the inevitable consequences of any serious or determining error of doctrine. Hereafter we shall have occasion to point out several errors in Christology and to note their consequences. For the present it may suffice that we place the Socinian doctrine in contrast with the Chalcedonian or orthodox doctrine. In the former Christ is a mere man, a mere human person. No spiritual or miraculous endowments, not even such as the older Socinianism freely conceded, could change this fact. He

would still be a mere man. In the latter doctrine he is a theanthropic person—truly God-man. He is the Son of God incarnate in our nature. In this doctrine there is sure and sufficient ground for all the great facts of Christian soteriology: atonement; justification by faith; regeneration by the Holy Spirit; a new and gracious spiritual life. There is no ground for these great facts in the Socinian Christology. A mere human Christ could not make an atonement for sin. He could not be a Saviour in any other mode than that in which Peter and Paul, Luther and Wesley, Edwards and Asbury, were saviours. So determining is the doctrine of the person of Christ in Christian theology. Without his divinity and incarnation, without his theanthropic personality, he is another Christ, and Christianity is robbed of its divine realities in the measure of the change in him.

2. *Early Need of Doctrinal Construction.*—In Christianity, even from the beginning, Christ was the great theme of the Gospel and the life of Christian experience and hope. AN EARLY SUBJECT OF DEEP STUDY. Therefore he could not fail to be the subject of much thought. Nor could such thought limit itself to merely devotional meditations, but inevitably advanced to the study of his true nature or personality. For the deepest Christian consciousness Christ was the Saviour for whose sake all sin was forgiven, and in whose fellowship all the rich blessings of the new spiritual life were received. For such a consciousness he could not be a mere man. It is true that in the history of his life he appeared in the fashion of a man and in the possession of human characteristics; still, for the Christian consciousness he must have been more than man. But how much more? And wherein more? Such questions could not fail to be asked; and in the very asking there was a reaching forth of Christian thought for a doctrine of the person of Christ. In such a mental movement the many utterances of Scripture which ascribe to him a higher nature and higher perfections than the merely human would soon be reached. Here it is that a doctrine of the person of Christ would begin to take form. He is human, and yet more than human; is the Son of God incarnate in the nature of man; is human and divine.

Reflective thought could not pause at this stage. If Christ is both divine and human in his natures, how are these THE QUESTIONS DISCUSSED. natures related to each other? What is the influence of each upon the other on account of their conjunction or union in him? Is Christ two persons according to his two natures, or one person in the union of the two? Such questions were inevitable. Nor could they remain unanswered. The answers were given in the

different theories of the person of Christ which appeared in the earlier Christian centuries.

It is not to be thought strange that theories differed. The subject is one of the profoundest. It lies in the mystery of the divine incarnation. The divine Son invests himself in human nature. So far the statement of the incarnation is easily made; but the statement leaves us on the surface of the profound reality. With a merely tactual or sympathetic union of the two natures, and consequently two distinct persons in Christ, the reality of the divine incarnation disappears. With the two distinct natures, and the two classes of divine and human facts, how can he be one person? Is the divine nature humanized, or the human nature deified in him? Or did the union of the two natures result in a third nature different from both, and so provide for the oneness of his personality? The Scriptures make no direct answer to these questions. They give us many Christological facts, but in elementary form, and leave the construction of a doctrine of the person of Christ to the resources of Christian thought.

Soon various doctrines were set forth. In each case the doctrine was constructed according to what was viewed as the more vital or determining fact of Christology, as related to the person of Christ. Opposing views and errors of doctrine were the result. More or less contention was inevitable. The interest of the subject was too profound for theories to be held as mere private opinions, or with indifference to opposing views. The strife was a serious detriment to the Christian life. Hence there was need of a carefully constructed doctrine of the person of Christ; need that the construction should be the work of the best Christian thought, and that it should be done in a manner to secure the highest moral sanction of the Church.

3. *Formula of the Council of Chalcedon.*—The state of facts previously described called for some action of the Church which might correct or, at least, mitigate existing evils. Certainly there was need that errors in Christology should be corrected and contending parties reconciled. A council which should embody the truest doctrinal thought of the Church seemed the best agency for the attainment of these ends. The Council of Chalcedon was constituted accordingly, in the year of our Lord 451.

The Council of Nice was specially concerned with the doctrine of the Trinity. The doctrine constructed clearly and strongly asserted the true and essential divinity of Christ, but expressed nothing definitely respecting his personality. For more than a century this great question still

DIFFERENCES  
OF DOCTRINE.

ERRORS OF  
DOCTRINE.

PURPOSE OF  
THE COUNCIL.

WORK OF THE  
COUNCIL OF  
NICE.

remained without doctrinal formulation by any assembly properly representative of the Church. The construction of such a doctrine was the special work of the Council of Chalcedon. The subject was not a new one. Much preparatory work had been done. Many minds were in possession of the true doctrine, which was already the prevalent faith of the Church. There was such preparation for the work of this Council. Indeed, the notable letter of Leo, Pope of Rome, to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, so accurately and thoroughly outlined a doctrinal statement of the person of Christ, that little more remained for the Council than to cast the material into the mold of its own thought and send it forth under the moral sanction of the Church.

Perfection is rarely attained in such work ; never, indeed, on so profound a subject. Yet the work of this Council was well done. The Chalcedonian symbol combines the elements of truth respecting the person of Christ. NO BETTER CONSTRUCTION OF THE DOCTRINE. There is no better construction of the doctrine. It is true that this symbol has not completely dominated the Christological thought of the Church ; yet it has ever held a position of commanding influence, and has furnished the material and the model for the Christological symbols since constructed in the orthodox Churches. In view of these facts we here give it entire :

“We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in Manhood ; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body ; consubstantial [co-essential] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood ; in all things like unto us, without sin ; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the mother of God, according to the Manhood ; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, *inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably* ; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ ; as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Schaff : *Creeeds of Christendom*, vol. ii, pp. 62, 63.

It is proper to note the doctrinal contents of this formula, so far as they directly concern the question of the person of Christ. He is the subject of its doctrinal predications.

Christ, the incarnate Son, is truly and essentially divine: "perfect in Godhead;" "consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead." In these affirmations there is a formal exclusion of the Arian Christology, which denied the essential divinity of Christ.

The real and complete humanity of Christ is definitely affirmed. He is "truly man, of a reasonable soul and body;" "consubstantial with us according to the manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin." These affirmations were formally exclusive of two heresies in Christology: the Gnostic, which denied to Christ the possession of a real body of flesh and blood; and the Apollinarian, which denied to him the possession of a human mind.

The personal oneness of Christ in the union of the two natures is affirmed: "One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one person and one subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons." These doctrinal predications excluded two heresies in Christology: the Nestorian, in which Christ was held to be two persons, not one; and the Eutychian, which held the deification of the human nature in consequence of its union with the divine in the incarnation; so that the human nature became one with the divine.

On this great question the Athanasian Creed is in full accord with the Chalcedonian: "For the right faith is that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man; . . . perfect God, and perfect man, of reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. . . . Who, although he be God and man, yet he is not two, but one Christ. One, not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God: one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ."<sup>1</sup> It is readily seen that this creed affirms both the divinity and humanity of Christ, and the oneness of his personality in the union of the two natures in him.

The Council of Chalcedon declared its Christological symbol to be

<sup>1</sup> Schaff: *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. ii, pp. 68, 69.

final, and forbade the formation of any other, under penalty of excommunication. Yet the Council of Constantinople, in the year of our Lord 680, made important Christological formulations, and joined them to the Chalcedonian symbol in a manner which evinced the purpose of making them an integral part of that symbol.<sup>1</sup> These additions were specially intended for the correction or exclusion of monothelitism, the doctrine of one will in Christ, and to establish in its stead the doctrine of two wills: a divine will, and a human will. We here have the monothelitic and diothelitic issue—the question whether Christ had one or two wills. There is no more difficult question in Christology. It concerns the deepest mystery of the divine incarnation. It is not, therefore, a question for much dogmatism; yet, naturally enough, both parties to the issue were intensely dogmatic.

Monothelitism could readily admit a human will as really present in the complete human nature assumed in the divine incarnation; but the denial of its exercise in volitions distinctively human involved the very difficult task of properly interpreting many facts in the life of Christ which were seemingly of a purely human cast. On the other hand, if such human volitions are asserted, the result must be either a Nestorian or a Socinian Christology. We regard the Constantinopolitan additions to the Chalcedonian symbol as really Nestorian, though not so intended. The existence of two wills in Christ is strongly asserted; and the human is viewed, not merely as an element of the human nature assumed in the incarnation, but as an active agency in the life of Christ. There are two natural energies or operations—which must mean the separate energizings of a divine will and a human will in Christ.

Nothing that follows respecting the union and harmony of the two wills in Christ can bring their alleged duality into consistency with the oneness of his personality. The assertion respecting the complete submission of the human will to the divine will, instead of eliminating the Nestorian dualism, really concedes it.<sup>2</sup> No such obligatory or becoming submission can be required of any impersonal thing. Not even the heavens can be subject to any such law of courtesy, propriety, or duty. No more can a finite will in its abstract self, or apart from a finite person, be the subject of any such law. Only a person can yield a becoming or dutiful submission to the divine will. Hence, in the

<sup>1</sup> Schaff: *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. ii, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> “Oportebat enim carnis voluntatem moveri, subjici vero voluntati divinæ, juxta sapientissimum Athanasium.”

assertion of such a submission of the human will to the divine will in Christ, there is an assumed personal dualism which cannot be reconciled with the oneness of his personality. This is really the Nestorian error.

## II. ELEMENTS OF THE DOCTRINE.

1. *The Divine Nature of Christ.*—As we found in the divinity of the Son a necessary element of the doctrine of the Trinity, so must we find in the divinity of Christ a necessary element of the doctrine of his personality, as it is maintained by VITAL IN CHRISTOLOGY. the Church. If he does not possess a divine nature through the incarnation of the divine Son, there is not in him the ground of a theanthropic personality, and the Chalcedonian Christology must give place to an Arian, Nestorian, or Socinian Christology. So vital is the question of a divine nature in Christ. However, much of this question was anticipated in the discussion of the divinity of the Son as a necessary part of the doctrine of the Trinity. That discussion need not here be repeated; and it will meet all further requirement that we set forth, in its appropriate place and on the grounds of Scripture, the incarnation of the Son in the person of Christ.

2. *The Human Nature of Christ.*—The reality of a human nature in Christ is determined by the presence of human PRESENCE OF HUMAN FACTS. facts in his life. This determination is on a principle which underlies science, and is valid for the knowledge of things in the many spheres of science. In all these spheres we know things by the presence of their distinctive qualities. The principle is thoroughly valid respecting the human nature of Christ. As we know men to be human, thoroughly human, by the presence of human facts in their lives, so by the presence of such facts in the life of Christ we know that he possessed a complete human nature. We are just as certain of this in the instance of Christ as in that of any eminent man of history. So far we have proceeded on the assumption of such human facts in his life, and, therefore, must now set them forth as they are given in the Scriptures. A summary presentation will suffice for the present point.

It is in the meaning of the first promise of a Saviour that he FACTS IN POINT. should be the lineal offspring of Eve;<sup>1</sup> and this means his possession of a human nature. There are various Christological facts which, in form and meaning, are in close accordance with this first promise. Christ is the seed of Abraham;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xxii, 18; Acts iii, 25.



is the offspring of David;<sup>1</sup> is made of a woman;<sup>2</sup> is born of Mary;<sup>3</sup> is the Son of man.<sup>4</sup> All these facts mean the reality of a human nature in Christ. He was born in the manner of other children, and, both physically and mentally, grew in the manner of others: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."<sup>5</sup>

The great texts of the divine incarnation clearly contain the truth of a human nature in Christ, and can receive no proper interpretation without it. Indeed, the reality of the divine incarnation is the reality of a human nature in Christ. A body was prepared for the Son, that through an incarnation he might redeem mankind.<sup>6</sup> The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.<sup>7</sup> The Son, who was in the form of God, was made in the likeness of man.<sup>8</sup> He assumed a body of flesh and blood in the likeness of our own.<sup>9</sup> However, as these and other texts of the incarnation must be considered in the direct treatment of that subject they need no formal exposition here.

If it should be said that these texts make no direct mention of a human soul as a part of the nature assumed by the Son, the fact is admitted; but it is not admitted that they mean any restriction to a mere physical nature. That in the incarnation the divine Son did assume a complete human nature, the mind as well as the body, is manifest in many facts in the life of Christ. These facts are such that they cannot be interpreted without the presence of a human mind in him. We recall the fact of his increase in wisdom. This increase shows the presence and development of a human mind. This is none the less certain if we account his growing wisdom specially moral or spiritual in its kind. For such a growth there must be a ground in rational mind. The temptations of Christ, both as presented to him and as endured or repelled by him, show the presence of a human mind. We may specially note the temptation in the wilderness.<sup>10</sup> Hunger is a physical appetite, and may be suffered by an animal; but only with a rational mind can any one receive or repel such a temptation in the manner of Christ. The other temptations, the one to religious presumption and the other to ambition, whether viewed in the manner of their presentation or in that of their resistance, can have no satisfactory interpretation without the presence of a human mind in him. He has joy of soul: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxii, 16.<sup>2</sup> Gal. iv, 4.<sup>3</sup> Matt. i, 21-25.<sup>4</sup> Matt. xiii, 37.<sup>5</sup> Luke ii, 52.<sup>6</sup> Heb. x, 5-9.<sup>7</sup> John i, 14.<sup>8</sup> Phil. ii, 6, 7.<sup>9</sup> Heb. ii, 14.<sup>10</sup> Matt. iv, 1-10.

thee, O Father.”<sup>1</sup> Only with the presence of a human mind can we find the ground of a joy of spirit so thoroughly human in its cast. Christ had sorrow, many and deep sorrows, and such as were specially mental in their mode. It suffices that we recall his deep words on the night of his betrayal: “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.”<sup>2</sup> These words must mean a human soul, though his suffering was far deeper than a mere human consciousness. The sympathy of Christ, through a law of common suffering with us, as set forth in the Scriptures, is possible only with his possession of a mental nature like our own.<sup>3</sup> The perfecting of Christ through suffering, that he might accomplish the work of our salvation, means, and must mean, his possession of a human soul.<sup>4</sup>

3. *The Personal Oneness of Christ.*—Oneness of personality is intrinsic to personality itself. With the presence of its distinctive facts, and the absence of all contrary facts, we are sure of its reality and oneness. Personality is a most definite form of existence. Its determinations thoroughly differentiate it from every other mode of being. These determinations are well known in our observation of others as well as in our own consciousness. There is nothing of which we are more certain respecting either ourselves or others. By the presence of its distinctive and determining facts in any human life we know the reality and oneness of the personality which they express. To assume a duality of persons in what is formally one human life would be to assume two sets of personal facts as really distinct as in the instance of any two men. By the presence of personal facts in the life of Christ, and the absence of all facts expressive of duality, we know the oneness of his personality just as we know that of any man of historic eminence. He appears among men as one person, talks and acts as one. In his words he often uses the personal pronouns in application to himself, just as he uses them in application to others. Thus I, mine, me, frequently occur in his discourses and conversations. Friends and foes address him and speak of him in like manner. Clearly, they fully recognize the oneness of his personality. There is no intimation of any thought of a duality of persons in Christ.

Such are the facts as given in the Scriptures; and they are the more decisive because, while the personal qualities ascribed to Christ are often in the utmost contrast, there is no intimation of any personal duality. Some have a purely human

<sup>1</sup> Luke x, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi, 38.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. ii, 17, 18; iv, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. ii, 9, 10.

cast, while others have the perfection of divine attributes. He is at once the Son of God and the Son of man; a newly born child and the everlasting Father; before all things and yet of human lineage; upholder of all things and yet daily subsisting in the manner of men. If the Scriptures mean any duality of persons in Christ, surely that distinction would be made, or at least recognized, in ascribing to him personal facts so widely different. There is no such recognition. Hence his personal oneness must be a truth of the Scriptures.

We may easily verify and illustrate the above statements by reference to a few appropriate texts. The Messiah is at once a child born, a son given, and truly God—The PERSONALLY ONE IN TWO NATURES. Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.<sup>1</sup> The child of Mary is Emmanuel, God with us.<sup>2</sup> Christ is both the Son and Lord of David—Son in the sense of a human lineage, Lord in the sense of divinity.<sup>3</sup> Wearied by his journey, Jesus sat and rested on the well of Jacob, and asked a drink of water of the woman of Samaria. Then, in further conversation, he assured her that he could give her to drink of the water of life, and that whosoever drank of this water should never thirst, but possess the fountain of everlasting life.<sup>4</sup> Herein the person who sat by the well as a weary man asserted for himself the resources of divinity. The same personal Christ is of Jewish lineage, as concerning his flesh, and over all, God blessed forever.<sup>5</sup> We have given the substance of a few texts out of many. They all concur in ascribing to Christ both human and divine attributes, and yet without any distinction as to his personality. That is ever one.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. ix, 6.<sup>2</sup> Matt. i, 23.<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxii, 42-45.<sup>4</sup> John iv, 6-14.<sup>5</sup> Rom. ix, 5.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE DIVINE INCARNATION.

## I. DOCTRINE OF THE INCARNATION.

1. *Ground of the Person of Christ.*—When we speak of the personality of Christ we have in view, not that of the unincarnate Son, nor that of a man simply, but the unique personality which arises from a union of the divine nature with the human. Only in this union could there be such a person as Christ. He is God in his divine nature and man in his human nature, but in personality he is the God-man. Hence the incarnation of divinity in humanity is the necessary ground of such a personality. The necessary union of the two natures is possible only in the mode of a divine incarnation. The divine nature is eternal, while the human originated in time. The divine was therefore eternally before the human. Hence the union of the two in the person of Christ must have been an event in time. The divine Son did incarnate himself in human nature, or did take the nature of man into personal union with himself; and this union is the ground of the unique personality of Christ.

AS GOD-MAN.

2. *The Incarnation a Truth of Scripture.*—A few appropriate texts will suffice for the setting forth of this truth. Those that we shall use are more or less familiar to students of theology, and, therefore, need not be formally cited.

We begin with the words of St. John.<sup>1</sup> The Word was in the beginning, was with God, and was God, by whom all things were made. The Word must be a personal being, for only a personal being can be the subject of such predications. Also, he must be a divine being. The predications are as conclusive of divinity as of personality. He who was in the beginning, and the creator of all things, must possess the attributes of omniscience and omnipotence, and, therefore, must be God. Accordingly, the text declares that the Word was God. Then, in the fourteenth verse, it is declared that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us—made flesh, not by transmutation of his nature into a body of flesh, but by the incarnation of himself in the nature

DOCTRINE OF  
ST. JOHN.

<sup>1</sup> John i, 1-3, 14.

of man. The words "and dwelt among us" forcibly mean such an incarnation. Then this same verse clearly identifies the Word with the Son of God: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

We have a great Christological text from St. Paul.<sup>1</sup> Three facts are specially noted: Christ in the form of God; Christ in equality with God; Christ in the likeness of men.

DOCTRINE OF  
ST. PAUL

These facts contain the truth of a divine incarnation. "Who, being in the form of God"—ὅς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων. Mostly, these words have been interpreted to mean an existence in the nature of God. Such a sense of μορφῇ is fully warranted by its use; and such must be its meaning here; or, at least, the words together must mean an existence in possession of the divine perfections. Such, for the most part, has been their interpretation since the time when the great questions of Christology first came into formal discussion. They are still so interpreted by some of the ablest expositors. "Though μορφῇ is not the same as φύσις or οὐσία, yet the possession of the μορφῇ involves participation in the οὐσία also; for μορφῇ implies not the external accidents, but the essential attributes."<sup>2</sup>

VIEW OF  
LIGHTFOOT.

Only with such a sense of μορφῇ—form—can the several parts of the text be brought into harmony. The pre-existence of Christ in the form of God is clearly the ground of his rightful claim to an equality with God—τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ. Wherein equal? Not in divine perfection, for that would identify the object of his claim with its ground; but equal in estate, in the glory which he had with the Father. Only the possession of divine perfection could be the ground of a rightful claim to such an equality with God. Thus these two facts come into harmony, and each interprets the other. With these facts in possession, other facts of the text are easily interpreted. The equality of estate with God and the form of a servant in the likeness of men appear in their proper antithesis, while the Son freely surrenders the former and accepts the latter instead. "Being made in the likeness of men" and "being found in fashion as a man" can mean nothing less or other than the assumption and possession of a human nature. Thus we have the truth of a divine incarnation.

HARMONY OF  
THE FACTS.

In another passage St. Paul clearly gives the same truth.<sup>3</sup> Here the facts are presented in an order reverse to that observed in the texts already noticed, but none the less definitely on that account. The subject of the text is the Son,

ANOTHER TEXT  
OF ST. PAUL.

<sup>1</sup> Phil. ii, 6-8.

<sup>2</sup> Lightfoot: Philippians, in loc.

<sup>3</sup> Col. i, 13-17.

“in whom we have redemption through his blood.” The blood means the Son’s possession of a body like our own. Then the facts which follow in the same text are conclusive of his true and essential divinity. This was shown before in treating the works of the Son as the proof of his divinity. No text in the Scriptures more clearly or surely expresses the work of a divine creation: “For by him—the Son through whose blood we have redemption—were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, principalities or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” The divine Son, thus proved to be truly and essentially divine, must have incarnated himself in our nature before he could redeem us with his blood.

“God was manifest in the flesh.”<sup>1</sup> This is the explicit truth of the divine incarnation. No reason of doubt whether A THIRD TEXT OF ST. PAUL. *θεός* belongs to the original text can affect its meaning respecting the incarnation. It is the divine Son who was manifest in the flesh. This is determined by the facts which immediately follow: “Justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” The truth of the divinity of the Son is in no sense dependent upon the genuineness of *θεός* in this text. His divinity has the most thorough proof in the Scriptures, and the text now in hand clearly and definitely asserts his incarnation.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is replete with Christological facts. EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. Among these is the incarnation of the divine Son. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.”<sup>2</sup> This text is central to others which fully determine its meaning. The divinity of the Son is clearly given in the first chapter of this epistle. He is the maker of worlds and the upholder of all things by the word of his power. He is Lord of the angels and the object of their supreme worship. In the beginning he laid the foundation of the earth and framed the heavens; and while they shall wax old and perish he is the same, and his years fail not.<sup>3</sup> This is the divine Son who incarnated himself in the nature of man. Therein he was made a little lower than the angels, that through death he might redeem mankind. Thus he entered into brotherhood with men in the assumption of their nature, that by his own death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. iii, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. ii, 14.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. i, 2, 3, 6, 10-12.

life-time subject to bondage.<sup>1</sup> This is the truth of a divine incarnation.

3. *Incarnation of the Personal Son.*—The full truth of the incarnation is not contained in the notion of a union of the divine nature, simply as such, with the human nature. The subject of the incarnation was not a mere nature, but a person—the personal Son. The divine nature is common to the persons of the Trinity; therefore any limitation of the incarnation to the divine nature would deny to the Son any distinct or peculiar part therein. This would contradict the most open and uniform sense of Scripture. The Father and the Holy Spirit had no such part in the incarnation as the Son. Nor could any union of the divine nature, simply as such, with the human nature give the profound truth and reality of the incarnation. It could mean nothing for the unique personality of the Christ; nothing for the reality and sufficiency of the atonement.

The Scriptures are most explicit respecting the incarnation of the personal Son. We have already seen this in the great texts of the incarnation, and it may suffice for the present point that we recall a part of them. In the statement of the first text it was the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us; but in the same text the Word is identified with the divine Son.<sup>2</sup> In the next it is the Son through whose blood we have redemption and remission of sins, the Son who created all things.<sup>3</sup> This must mean the incarnation of the personal Son. This same truth is clearly given in the texts of the incarnation, which we found in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Again, it is the Son who created all worlds, who is Lord of the angels and the object of their supreme worship, that was made a little lower than the angels by an incarnation in which he assumed a body of flesh and blood.<sup>4</sup>

We have specially noted this fact of the incarnation for the reason of its relation to the person of the Christ. There is an intimate, even a determining relation of the one to the other. Christ could not be a wholly new personality, because the personality of the Son could not be suspended or neutralized by the incarnation. His true and essential divinity forbids the notion of any such result. The personality of the Son, as verified to himself in the facts of his own consciousness, must forever abide. The immutability of the Son in his essential being and in his personal attributes affirms this truth. Therein lies the ground of the immutability of Christ: “Jesus Christ the same yesterday,

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ii, 9, 11, 14, 15.

<sup>2</sup> John i, 14.

<sup>3</sup> Col. i, 13-16.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. i, ii.

and to-day, and forever."<sup>1</sup> With all his mutations of estate, he is eternally the same, because he is the incarnate Son. The personality of the Son must forever abide.

What, then, is the result of the incarnation in the personality of the Son? Not a new personality, but a modified personality—modified by the possession of new facts of consciousness. The reality of the incarnation will not allow us to stop short of this result. We here face a profound question, but shall find a more appropriate place for its discussion. Any question which involves the reality of the incarnation must be profound. Respecting these new facts of consciousness many questions of difficulty and doubt might readily be asked. How could the divine Son come into the possession of new facts of consciousness? No definite answer may be given as to the mode, but surely the possibility lies in the fact that he is a person, with the ceaseless exercise of a personal agency. What are the new facts of consciousness? Such as came to him through the human nature assumed in the incarnation. What could the incarnation mean, or what could be its reality, without such result? Not else could there be a union of the two natures in a personal oneness; not else the unique personality of the Christ; not else the God-man.

## II. THE TWO NATURES IN PERSONAL ONENESS.

1. *The Result of the Incarnation.*—The reality of the incarnation determines the personal oneness of the Christ in the union of the two natures. We already have the facts which verify this statement. They came into our possession while discussing the doctrine of the person of Christ, and more fully in the treatment of the incarnation. The divine Son did not place himself in a merely tactual or sympathetic union with a human person, even though it were the closest possible to the mode, but so united our nature with himself as to share our experiences. The Christ is the Son incarnate. He is one person, but in possession of both divine and human attributes. The divine nature is the necessary ground of the former; the human, the necessary ground of the latter. Therefore while he is personally one he must possess both natures in a personal oneness. This is the meaning and the result of the incarnation. Only with such a result can it be a reality—such a reality as will interpret the Scriptures, or meet the necessity for an atonement, or satisfy the deepest religious consciousness.

2. *The Catholic Doctrine.*—That the union of the two natures in

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xiii, 8.



the personal oneness of Christ is, in the proper sense of catholic, the catholic doctrine, is so surely and openly true that it needs no elaborate treatment. The doctrine is embodied in the creeds of the Churches. Exceptions are too rare to discredit or render inaccurate the general statement. Even its omission from a creed may not mean its omission in the faith of the Church which formulates such creed. The creeds of some Churches are very brief, and deal but little with formulations of doctrine. In such instances the omitted doctrine of the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ may hold its place as firmly in the faith of the Church as other fundamental doctrines likewise omitted.

This doctrine is in the ecumenical creeds, and by their acceptance has become the catholic doctrine. It is true that this doctrine was not definitely formulated in the Nicene Creed, but the ground of it was therein laid, and so far it became the faith of the Church. It is also true that the Athanasian Creed was not formally ecumenical, but the consensus of the Church soon gave it ecumenical character, and thus determined the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ, so definitely formulated in this creed, to be the doctrine of the Church universal. There follows the Chalcedonian symbol, formulated by an ecumenical council convened for the definite purpose of constructing a doctrine of the person of Christ. Nothing in this doctrine is more definitely formulated than the union of the two natures in his personal oneness. This was then the creed of the whole Church. Since the division into the Greek and Roman it has been in common the creed of both.

It is the doctrine of the Protestant Churches: of the Lutheran; of the Reformed; of the Churches which hold substantially the Westminster Confession; of the Church of England; of the Methodist Churches, and of others here omitted. It is thus manifestly true that the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ is the catholic doctrine.

3. *Mystery of the Doctrine.*—We reach the profoundest mystery of the incarnation in the personal oneness of the divine-human Christ. It is, if possibly so, a profounder mystery than the doctrine of the Trinity. The notion of three personal subsistences in one nature seems less remote from the grasp of thought than a unity of personality in the union of two natures, each of which is normally a person. Personality itself is a profound mystery. How obscure the notion of an unbodied spirit endowed with personal faculties and active in modes of personal agency! Nor do we attain to any clearness of view in the instance of personal mind enshrined in a physical organism. Indeed, it is difficult

IN THE ECUMENICAL CREEDS.

IN THE PROTESTANT CREEDS.

PERSONALITY A MYSTERY.

to say in which case lies the deeper mystery. Even our own experience in the embodied mode of life clears no obscurity. That we thus exist and personally act we know, but below these facts all is mystery. Surely, then, it is not for us to grasp in thought the personality of the Christ in the union of a human nature with the divine.

The constitution of our own personality in the union of two distinct natures, the mental and the physical, has been in frequent use for the illustration of the person of Christ. Any helpful illustration would be accepted readily, but we can find no help in the one here offered. The want of analogy wholly voids the illustration. In order to secure any ground of analogy our mental and physical natures must be combined in the basis of our personality. This is attempted, but certainly without attainment. In man the seat of personality is wholly in the mind, and there is no ground for two personalities in his constituent natures. No attribute of personality belongs to the body. The mind is the whole personal self, and if disembodied would still possess its personality. For the present life the body determines some modes of its personal agency and some facts of its consciousness, but has no part in its personal constitution nor place in its ground. But the human nature assumed by the divine Son in the person of Christ not only may be a person, but normally is a person. The depth of mystery lies in the union of two such natures in the unity of personality. For the illustration of such a personality there is no analogy in the constitution of our own. The mystery deepens in the fact that in his personality the finite blends with the infinite. In his consciousness there is a mingling of human forms of experience

THE PERSON OF  
CHRIST A MYSTERY.

with forms of the divine consciousness. The person of Christ is a mystery of Christian truth without solution in our reason. It is proper here to recall the profound difference, previously pointed out, between a mystery and a contradiction. There is nothing in the doctrine of the person of Christ which contradicts our reason. The world is full of mysteries, but mystery is not the limit of assured truth. On the ground of Scripture the doctrine of the person of Christ, as previously set forth, is true, and on that ground we hold it in a sure faith.

Two facts are offered in aid of our thought. If not of any service for the solution of this mystery they may be helpful toward a true notion of the person of Christ.

One fact is that it was a form of human nature, simply as such, and not in personal development, that the Logos assumed in the incarnation. While it is conceded that the assumption of a human nature in its personal form would have

resulted in a duality of persons in Christ, it is claimed that by the assumption of a human nature as yet impersonal such a consequence is avoided. "If the Son of God had taken to himself a man now made and already perfected, it would of necessity follow that there are in Christ two persons, the one assuming and the other assumed; whereas the Son of God did not assume a man's person into his own, but a man's nature to his own person, . . . the very first original element of our nature, before it was come to have any personal human subsistence. . . . By taking only the nature of man he still continueth one person, and changeth but the manner of his subsisting, which was before in the mere glory of the Son of God, and is now in the habit of our flesh."<sup>1</sup>

Of course, the fact here given as securing the oneness of personality in Christ requires that the assumed human nature should in itself ever remain in an impersonal form; for any subsequent change into a personal mode would have the same consequence of personal duality as an original incarnation of the Son in a human person. Yet this notion of a mere human nature must not be carried too far, nor held too rigidly, else the nature itself will not account for the human facts in the life of Christ. We know nothing of the mode of connection between a mental nature and a physical organism, whereby the physical determines the cast of many facts of experience in the mental. No more can we know the mode in which the spiritual nature of man must be related to the incarnate Logos so as to constitute in him the ground of experiences like our own. Yet it seems manifest that there can be no such ground without the activity of the mental nature assumed with the physical nature in the incarnation. This must be the case in respect to such experiences as have a specially mental cast. While, therefore, we may deny to the human nature assumed in the incarnation a distinct personal subsistence in Christ, we must still allow it such forms of activity as will account for the human facts of his incarnate life.

The other fact is that the ground of the personality of Christ is in his divine nature, not in his human nature. There is here such a distinction between nature and person as we find in the doctrine of the Trinity, as formulated by the Council of Nice. While we cannot think of the divine nature as ever actually in an impersonal state, we can so think of a human nature. Indeed, the nature of every man exists in an impersonal mode before it attains to personality. In this case, however, as in the preceding one, it must be assumed that the human nature of Christ

<sup>1</sup> Hooker : *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book v, § 52.

remains without personality in itself. But in this case, as in that, it must not be assumed that the human nature remains inactive or without effect in the consciousness of Christ. Such an assumption would deny the reality of the divine incarnation. While it is true that our own mind has the ground of its personality entirely in itself, yet its enshrinement in a physical organism has much to do with its consciousness. So the impersonal human nature assumed in the incarnation may determine many facts in the consciousness of Christ. Thus arises his theanthropic personality. In the consciousness of both divine and human facts he is the God-man. The new facts of consciousness are entirely consistent with the unity of his personality—just as the experiences which come to the human personality through the bodily organism are entirely consistent with its unity.

## CHAPTER III.

## CHRIST IS THEANTHROPIC.

THERE is a sense in which Christ is God, and a sense in which he is man; but there is a deeper sense in which he is God-man. His theanthropic character is determined by the union of the divine and human natures in his personality. That he is truly theanthropic is clearly a truth of the Scriptures. It is the key to the many Christological paradoxes which they contain.

## I. THEANTHROPIC IN PERSONALITY.

1. *Permanent Duality of His Natures.*—It is the doctrine of the Church, as definitely formulated in the Chalcedonian symbol, that the union of the two natures in Christ is forever an inseparable one. This, however, is not the present question. The point we here make is that the natures suffer no change in consequence of their union in Christ. This also is the doctrine of the Church, and, as we have already shown, is very fully and definitely expressed in the same Christological symbol. There is neither change nor mixture of the natures. The divine is not transmuted into the human; the human is not transmuted into the divine. There is no mixing of the natures, with a resultant third nature, or indefinable *tertium quid*—something neither human nor divine.

Christological speculation has not been entirely without the notion of such results of the divine incarnation. We may instance the monophysitic or Eutychian heresy, according to which the human nature was so changed by its union with the divine nature that it ceased to be human and really became divine. It would follow that there was but one nature in Christ. This is one of the errors which the Council of Chalcedon so formally excluded from the doctrine which it formulated. Without a personal union of the two unchanged natures in Christ the facts which appear in his life must remain without any satisfactory interpretation. There is in his life a mingling of human and divine facts. The human can have no ground in a purely divine nature; the divine, no ground in a purely human nature. The presence of two classes of facts, the human and the divine, in the

A CONTRARY  
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one life of Christ imperatively requires the presence of both natures in the unity of his personality.

2. *Communion of Attributes in His Personality.*—There is in doctrinal Christology a distinction between the communion and the communication of attributes in Christ. The former means simply that the attributes of the two natures are common to the person of Christ; the latter, that each nature communicates its attributes to the other; particularly, that the divine nature imparts its attributes to the human nature. The theory is technically expressed as the *communicatio idiomatum*. This was really the monophysitic or Eutychian theory, previously noticed, and which we found to be excluded as a heresy from the doctrine of the Church. As a modern theory, it has its place mostly in the Lutheran theology. It is necessary to the doctrine of consubstantiation—the doctrine of the real presence of the body of Christ in the sacrament of the supper—as maintained in Lutheranism. As previously pointed out, the deification of the human nature of Christ cannot be reconciled with the human facts so thoroughly manifest in his life. This may here suffice, as we must again consider this theory.

The communion of the attributes in Christ, in the sense that the attributes of the two natures are common to his personality, is clearly a truth of the Scriptures, and a truth necessary to the interpretation of the Christological facts which they contain. Such a communion is determined by the nature of the divine incarnation. Therein the personal Son took the nature of man into personal union with himself. The two natures, without change in either, were thus united in the personal oneness of the Christ. Therefore, as he thus unites in himself the two natures, he must possess the attributes of both in the unity of his personality. Accordingly, the Scriptures freely, and with frequent repetition, ascribe to him both human and divine facts. In the collection of separate utterances we find the ascription of attributes in the utmost extremes. Christ is an infant in the arms of Mary, and over all, God blessed forever; weary from his journey, and the upholder of all things; grows in stature and acquires knowledge in the manner of other children, and yet is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. Often there are such ascriptions in the same verse or passage. Such are the paradoxes of Christology which find their interpretation in the theanthropic character of Christ.

3. *Truth of a Theanthropic Personality.*—As in his personality Christ possesses the attributes of both the divine nature and the

human, so must he be a theanthropic person. As a person he is not God merely, nor man merely, but God-man. This MEANING OF THE CREEDS. must be the meaning of the orthodox creeds, for otherwise they would be self-contradictory. They ever confess the oneness of Christ in two distinct natures. With such a duality of natures he can be one only in his personality. Yet, with the confession of the one Christ in the two natures, the same creeds declare him to be God and man. We may instance the Chalcedonian symbol.<sup>1</sup> The Christological symbol of the Methodist Episcopal Church is really the same.<sup>2</sup> But the immediate connection denies to these terms, very God and very man, a definite personal meaning in their application to Christ; for with this meaning the same symbol would confess him as one person, and also as two persons, and would be self-contradictory. Besides, it is not the meaning of either the Scriptures or the Christological symbols that in a personal sense Christ is very God *and* very man. This is really the Nestorian heresy, which the creeds so formally and thoroughly reject. Christ is very God and very man only in the sense that he possesses the two natures in the oneness of his personality. In his personal oneness he is simply and truly God-man.

The theanthropic personality of Christ is determined by the nature of the divine incarnation. This incarnation WAS RESULT OF THE INCARNATION. a profound reality. Therein the divine Son took the nature of man into a most intimate, even a personal union with himself. With this union of the two natures in Christ there is for him both divine and human facts of consciousness. There is still a unity of consciousness, as a central reality of all personality, but for this consciousness in Christ there are new facts, which are determined by his human nature. We have no insight into this mystery. Indeed, as previously pointed out, we have no insight into the enshrinement of our own mind in a physical organism, or into the unity of our own consciousness in the mingling of the diverse forms of experience as determined by our sensuous, rational, and moral natures. But, if we accept the personal union of a human nature with the divine nature, we should not stumble at the new facts of consciousness. They lie in the mystery of the incarnation, but surely belong to its reality. The facts determine the theanthropic character of the Christ. In the truest, deepest sense he is personally God-man.

<sup>1</sup> "We . . . confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . truly God and truly man."

<sup>2</sup> "So that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, . . . whereof is one Christ, very God and very man."—*Articles of Religion*, article ii.

4. *A Necessity to the Atonement.*—Any other union of the divine nature with the human than that in a personal oneness must leave the human in its own complete and separate personality. What, then, is the offering or sacrifice in atonement for sin? A human being, a mere man. No gracious endowments or supernatural gifts could change the grade of his being. As the paschal lamb whose blood was shed in atonement for sin was a mere lamb, so Christ, who was sacrificed for the redemption of the world, would be a mere man. This would mean that Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, was a mere man;<sup>1</sup> that our great High-priest, Jesus, the Son of God, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God in atonement for sin, was a mere man.<sup>2</sup> We need not pause to show how utterly false such a view is to the profound meaning of these texts, and of many others like them. All the fundamental truths of Christian theology must pronounce such a mere human sacrifice utterly insufficient for the redemption of the world.

These consequences cannot be obviated by any appeal to the offices of the Son as our great High-priest in the offering up of Christ on the cross. There is no priesthood of the Son without his incarnation in a manner which unites the nature of man in personal oneness with himself. Besides, if we divide the Christ into distinct personalities, the one divine and the other human, even the priestly service of the divine could not change the character or grade of the human sacrifice; it would still be merely human. Nor can we, in this case, hold priest and sacrifice in any such duality. Christ is, at once, both priest and sacrifice: “Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.” “For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”<sup>3</sup> Thus the identity of priest and sacrifice in the atonement is definitely a truth of the Scriptures. Any such division of Christ into a divine priest and a human sacrifice is manifestly false to the Scriptures; and it is equally false to the catholic doctrine of his personality. In the hour of our redemption the Christ does not fall asunder into two persons, the one divine and the other human, while the divine in the office of high-priest offers up the human in atonement for sin; but the divine, incarnate in the human, offers

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. iv, 14; ix, 14.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. vii, 27; ix, 26.



up himself. Only thus can we secure the truth and reality of the atonement. The possibility of such an atonement lies in the theanthropic personality of Christ.

## II. THE INTERPRETATION OF CHRISTOLOGICAL FACTS.

In treating the theanthropic character of Christ we might have begun with the multiform facts which the Scriptures ascribe to him, and thus in an inductive method reached the truth of his theanthropic personality. This truth, however, we found in the nature and reality of the divine incarnation. Now we find in this truth the key to the many Christological paradoxes which appear in the Scriptures. These paradoxes lie in the diverse facts which the Scriptures ascribe to Christ. But, while we find in his theanthropic personality the interpretation and harmony of these diverse facts, we also find therein the verification of his theanthropic character. Thus it is doubly proved that Christ is verily God-man.

THE KEY.

It should be specially noted that the facts here considered are ascribed to Christ in his personality, and are true of him as a person. Most of these facts have appeared already in our discussion, particularly in the treatment of the divinity and humanity of Christ, and therefore require only a summary presentation here.

FACTS OF PERSONALITY.

1. *Facts of Divinity Ascribed to Christ.*—The Son incarnate is the personal Christ. Hence, as we found the Son in possession of the distinctive facts of divinity, so we find the Christ in full possession of the same facts. The Scriptures ascribe to him the titles, attributes, works, and worshipfulness which belong only to true and essential divinity. All this ascription is thoroughly warranted on the ground of his divine nature.

2. *Facts of Humanity Ascribed to Christ.*—These facts were sufficiently given in treating the humanity of Christ, as furnishing the second element in the formulated doctrine of his personality. They are the common essential or distinctive facts of humanity. The Scriptures freely ascribe them to the same personal Christ to whom they ascribe the facts of divinity. This is properly done because he possesses a true and complete human nature. As the divine facts ascribed to him have their interpretation on the ground of his divinity, so these human facts have their interpretation on the ground of his human nature. Thus on the ground of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ the two classes of facts come into complete harmony.

In like manner we have the interpretation of various texts which

combine the two classes of facts in ascribing them to Christ. The child born, the Son given, is the mighty God, the everlasting Father.<sup>1</sup> He is in the form of God and in the likeness of men.<sup>2</sup> The same person who redeems us with his blood is before all things, and the creator and preserver of all things.<sup>3</sup> The combination of divine and human facts in these great texts places them in no contradictory opposition. The paradoxes remain, but, just as in the preceding instances, the facts come into complete harmony through the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ.

3. *Divine Facts Ascribed to Christ as Human.*—“And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.”<sup>4</sup> The words, “No man hath ascended up to heaven,” may have been intended to correct a somewhat prevalent notion, that Moses ascended into heaven in order to receive the law which he gave to the Hebrew people.<sup>5</sup> Two facts are to be noted: that Christ came down from heaven, and that when here on earth he was in heaven. Christ affirms both facts of himself as the Son of man. But he is the Son of man in his human nature, while his coming down from heaven and still being in heaven are facts of his divinity, which are thus ascribed to him as human.<sup>6</sup> Supreme worship is rendered to Christ as the Lamb that was slain: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. . . . Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.”<sup>7</sup> Such divine worship is rendered to Christ as the Lamb slain, and, therefore, as represented in his human nature. Many like texts might be added, but those given will suffice.

4. *Human Facts Ascribed to Christ as Divine.*—“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”<sup>8</sup> To be thus conceived and born are specially human facts; but they are ascribed to Christ as in view of his divine nature. This is manifest in his name, Emmanuel, God with us. The blood of Christ, shed in atonement for sin, is a fact of his human nature; but it is ascribed to him as divine. This appears in the words in which the ministry is charged “to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”<sup>9</sup> We have a like instance in the crucifixion of Christ: “They crucified the Lord

<sup>1</sup> Isa. ix, 6.<sup>2</sup> Phil. ii, 6, 7.<sup>3</sup> Col. i, 14–17.<sup>4</sup> John iii, 13.<sup>5</sup> Clarke: *Commentary*, in loc.<sup>6</sup> See also John vi, 38, 62.<sup>7</sup> Rev. v, 12, 13.<sup>8</sup> Matt. i, 23.<sup>9</sup> Acts xx, 28.

of glory.”<sup>1</sup> The human fact of the crucifixion is thus ascribed to Christ as divine. We cannot find a lower meaning in his designation as the Lord of glory.

We have thus found, under the last two heads, the ascription of divine facts to Christ as human, and the ascription of human facts to him as divine. The two cases have the THE INTERPRETATION. same interpretation. In each there is a synecdochical designation of Christ. This is a mode of speech much in use. Nor does it mislead or deceive any one. The meaning is thus given as clearly and definitely as in any other mode. The divine and human natures are so united in the person of Christ and so integral to his personality that he may properly be designated in the view of either. In any such instance the one nature represents the whole person of Christ. It follows that the two classes of facts, the divine and the human, may be respectively ascribed to him under the designation of either nature. Such is the interpretation of these two cases. But the very ground of this interpretation lies in the union of the two natures in the personality of Christ, just as we found it in the interpretation of the other facts considered in this section. Now, as the personal oneness of Christ in the union of the two natures furnishes the interpretation of all those facts, so, in turn, they confirm the truth of his personality as so constituted. But a personality so constituted must be truly theanthropic. Christ is very God-man.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii, 8.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE SYMPATHY OF CHRIST.

THE sympathy of Christ is in itself an important truth of Christology; but the special reason for its present treatment lies in its intimate relation to the question of his personality. Some facts which deeply concern this question may be most appropriately treated under the heading of the present chapter.

The sympathy of Christ has an open place in the Scriptures. Inspiration gives it clear and full expression. We may also view it in the light of our own sympathy, although there is a wide difference between the two. We ever associate the sympathy of Christ with his greatness, with the intensity of his suffering and the infinite fullness of his love. Hence, it has for our thought and feeling a fullness and sufficiency infinitely above all mere human sympathy. Still the fact of sympathy in ourselves is helpful in this study, and gives us the deeper and clearer insight into the sympathy of Christ.

With these several facts in hand this sympathy may seem to us a specially open truth and one most easy of comprehension. Simply as a fact it is most manifest, but as a truth for doctrinal study it is one of the profoundest in Christian theology. It is inseparably connected with the divine incarnation, and this fact invests some of its elements in a like mystery. Still it is a great and precious truth of Christology, and therefore a proper subject for our deepest study. In order to the greatest benefit of this sympathy in our Christian life there is need that we apprehend its real and sufficient grounds. The apprehension of these grounds will give us the clearer insight into the person of Christ.

## I. SYMPATHY THROUGH COMMON SUFFERING.

1. *A True and Deep Law of Sympathy.*—It is not assumed, nor could it be successfully maintained, that common suffering is a necessary condition of sympathy. Such a capacity seems intrinsic to our own nature wholly irrespective of any personal suffering. It is a fact of the Scriptures that holy and ever happy angels sympathize with us in the misery and peril of sin. Only with such sympathy can they have joy in our repentance and

salvation. Here we have an instance of very real sympathy without any ground in common suffering. The compassionate love of the Father, a love in profound sympathy with us, was the deepest source of the great plan of human redemption. Also, before the incarnation and suffering of the Son he was in loving sympathy with us.

It is none the less a truth that suffering, and particularly suffering in common with others, is a very real law of sympathy. Few, if any, are without the personal experience which verifies this law. Innumerable witnesses could testify to its reality. More readily, and as by the attraction of a special affinity, we go for sympathy to those who have suffered; for the deepest sympathy, to those who have suffered as we suffer.

2. *Law of the Sympathy of Christ.*—There is the same law of sympathy in Christ. This is not a speculation or mere inference, but an explicit truth of Scripture. And it is a truth to which the Christian consciousness is gratefully responsive. As in the exigencies of our trouble and sorrow we turn to Christ for his helpful sympathy, the fact of his own suffering in our nature, and in a manner so like our own, is ever most assuring.

It is proper that we here present this law of his sympathy in the light of the Scriptures. A few texts will suffice for the presentation. “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.”<sup>1</sup> There are other like words: “For we have not a high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”<sup>2</sup> Immediately preceding these words the duty of fidelity to the Christian profession is strongly enforced. “Seeing then that we have a great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.”<sup>3</sup> Such a characterization of our great High-priest as the Son of God, and as having passed into the heavens, might readily suggest a doubt whether one so remote in his exaltation and greatness could still have a helpful sympathy with his disciples in the sore trials incident to their Christian profession. Hence, as if in apprehension of such a doubt, there immediately follow the words, as previously cited, which give the fact of his own former sufferings as the ground and warrant of his ever-abiding sympathy. This law of his sympathy is thus specially emphasized.

3. *The Law Appropriated in the Incarnation.*—Our previous discussion of the incarnation supersedes any requirement for its

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ii, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. iv, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. iv, 14.

formal treatment here. All that we further need is to point out and briefly illustrate the fact stated in our last heading, that it was through his incarnation that Christ appropriated the law of his sympathy with us.

It seems clearly the sense of Scripture that a special purpose of the Son in the incarnation was that through a participation in our suffering he might have the deeper sympathy with us. It was in the incarnation that he was made a little lower than the angels; and therein he entered into the profound suffering which he endured.<sup>1</sup> A special reason for all this is immediately given, which means the truth here maintained: "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."<sup>2</sup> Other verses follow which are replete with the same truth. Through the incarnation the divine Son entered into a real brotherhood with man. In this brotherhood there is sympathy with us in our sufferings.<sup>3</sup> He thus met all the requirements for the work of our salvation: "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."<sup>4</sup>

It is thus manifest that the divine incarnation, with its result in the personality of the Christ, furnishes the real ground of his sympathy. Hence, if we would reach any proper apprehension of his sympathy we must view it in the light of his incarnation.

4. *Thorough Appropriation of the Law.*—The divine incarnation was very real; therefore the appropriation of this law of sympathy was very thorough. We need not here renew the formal discussion of the incarnation; yet a few facts which directly concern the present question may properly be specialized.

The divine Son assumed a real human nature. The facts, as given in the Scriptures, allow no place for the early Gnosticism which denied this reality and held the human form of Christ to be a mere phantasm. On the truth of such a theory there could have been no divine appropriation of a law of sympathy with us. The theory openly contradicts the facts of Scripture. In proof of this we need only to recall the appropriate texts, most of which were previously cited. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." "Forasmuch then as the children

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ii, 9.    <sup>2</sup> Heb. ii, 10.    <sup>3</sup> Heb. ii, 11-16.    <sup>4</sup> Heb. ii, 17, 18.

are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh."<sup>1</sup> It seems quite impossible to mistake the meaning of such explicit words respecting the reality of the human body of Christ.

In the incarnation the divine Son assumed, not only a real human body, but also a human soul, the soul and body thus constituting a complete human nature. This is, at A HUMAN SOUL. once, the sense of Scripture and the doctrine of the Church. Accordingly, the Church repudiated the Apollinarian heresy, which, while conceding to Christ a real body, denied to him a human mind, and assumed to provide for its functions in his life by the offices of the incarnate Logos. It was no such defective form of human nature that the divine Son assumed in the incarnation. The historic life of Christ can have no interpretation without the presence of a human mind. The MANIFEST IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST. phenomena of such a mind are just as manifest in his life as the phenomena of a body of flesh and blood. Further, without the presence of such a mind there could be no sufficient ground for the sympathy of Christ. Many of our own experiences in which we so much need his sympathy have their seat in our rational and moral nature. Hence the need that the "reasonable soul" should constitute a part of the nature assumed in the incarnation. It was only in a personal union with the human mind in his incarnation that the divine Son could appropriate the law of sympathy through a common suffering with us. This law he did fully appropriate by the assumption of our complete nature.

We here emphasize another point previously made. The human nature assumed in the incarnation suffered no change THE NATURE UNCHANGED. in consequence of this assumption. Again we meet an opposing and perverting heresy, the Eutychian, which assumed a transmutation of the human nature into the divine. With such a result there could be no place for the human facts in the life of Christ; no place for the experiences which are the ground of his sympathy. This heresy was rejected by the Church, and the truth was maintained, that the human nature assumed in the incarnation remained unchanged. With this truth the ground of the sympathy of Christ remains complete.

In the incarnation the complete human nature was taken into personal union with the divine. Here again there was A PERSONAL UNION. an opposing heresy, the Nestorian, which denied the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ, and

<sup>1</sup> John i, 14; Heb. ii, 14; 2 John 7.

held that in the historic Christ there were really two persons, the Son of God and a human person. Between the two, as thus distinct in personality, there could be only a spiritual communion. Consequently, there could be no sympathy of the Son through a law of common suffering with us. But, with the personal oneness of Christ in the union of the two natures, the ground of his sympathy remains complete.

The life of Christ is replete with instances of suffering in the likeness of our own. His sufferings were manifold and deep. In him were fulfilled the prophetic utterances of Isaiah: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."<sup>1</sup> He suffered trials even from his chosen disciples. Much more did he suffer the contradiction of hostile minds. Malignant eyes were ever upon him. Scribe and Pharisee, priest and people, were combined against him in hatred and persecution. Deep were his trials from the opposition of the wicked. There is profound meaning in the words: "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."<sup>2</sup>

These trials were such in kind as the disciples of Christ were called to suffer; for otherwise there could have been no power in his example of patience to fortify their minds with a like power of endurance. His own words picture to us other forms of trial: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."<sup>3</sup> Here again is the meaning of such trials as often enter into human experiences; only, the meaning is specially profound in the application of the words to Christ. Nor may we infer that his transcendent character in anywise rendered him indifferent to such forms of trial. With such loftiness of character his sensibilities were all the more acute.

Still, there are differences between Christ and ourselves which may suggest some doubt respecting this law of sympathy. One is that, whatever his temptation or trial, there was in him no evil tendency, while in us there is such a tendency. How, then, can he sympathize with us in our conflict with such a tendency, since there was no such experience in his own trials? The law of his sympathy is not deficient at this point. The profound reality of the divine incarnation still provides for its sufficiency. In the assumption of a complete human nature into a personal union with himself the divine Son entered so deeply into the consciousness of human experiences that, without any evil tendency of his own nature, he

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liii, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xii, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. viii, 20.



can sympathize with us in our conflict with such tendencies. We may instance his temptation in the wilderness.<sup>1</sup> In this temptation he knew in his own experience the intense appetite of very real hunger. He thus knew the appeal of worldly power and glory, and the solicitation to an irrational presumption upon the providence of God. All this must be admitted, or we sink these temptations into a mere appearance, with the consequence, that Christ was not really tempted in the wilderness. A solicitation in the sensibilities and an inclination responsive to its gratification are distinct facts, and the entire absence of the latter does not affect the reality of the former. While these forms of temptation found nothing responsive in the nature of Christ, as too often they do in our own, still he knew in his own experience their power of solicitation. These trials were so very real in the experience of Christ, and so comprehensive of the forms of our own trials, that they constitute in him a very real and profound law of sympathy with us.

There is another suggestion of doubt respecting this law of sympathy. It arises from the fact that we have forms of trial of which Christ had no experience. There are spheres of life into which he never entered, and hence he could not know in his own experience the precise forms of trial peculiar to these spheres. This is the view. It is true that in one text of Scripture the law of Christ's sympathy is based on an experience of trial as broad and diverse as our own: "For we have not a high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."<sup>2</sup> This, however, need not be interpreted in an absolute sense. Nor is it necessary that Christ should have entered into all the precise forms of our own trial in order to sympathize with us in all. We find in ourselves the power of sympathy with others in forms of trial peculiar to themselves, and the more deeply as we ourselves have suffered, though not in precisely the same form of trial. So his trials were so multiform and deep, and so thoroughly in the cast of our own, as to constitute in him the profoundest and most comprehensive law of sympathy with us. When we add to the many trials of his life the severe sufferings which crowded its closing hours the law of his sympathy with us is manifestly complete.

## II. THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF CHRIST IN SUFFERING.

In the conclusion of the previous section it was stated that the sufferings of Christ in common with our own were such in multiformity and intensity as to constitute a complete law of his sym-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iv, 1-11.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. iv, 15.

pathy with us. There is, however, a further question which vitally concerns the sufficiency of this law. It is the question of the consciousness of Christ in the sufferings which he endured. The doctrine of his personality is vitally concerned in this question.

1. *Deeper than a Human Consciousness.*—On the ground of the person of Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures and accepted in the faith of the Church, he suffered in a consciousness far deeper than a mere human consciousness. In a personal oneness there must be a unity of consciousness. With a distinct and purely human consciousness in Christ there must have been a distinct human person. The result would be either a Socinian or a Nestorian Christology. Christ must have been either a mere man or two persons, divine and human, in a merely spiritual communion. Each consequence is contrary to the accepted doctrine of the person of Christ, and subversive of all that is deep and evangelical in Christianity.

Yet even in the orthodox faith or with orthodox believers there is a tendency to the Nestorian view. While the theanthropic character of Christ, as determined by the union of the two natures in a oneness of personality, is accepted as a truth of doctrine, there is a halting at the consequent relation of his divine nature to the consciousness of his sufferings. In the thought of not a few his sufferings are restricted to a mere human consciousness. Such a limitation must mean a distinct human person in Christ, and consequently the sundering of Christ into two persons. This is openly contradictory to the accepted doctrine of his personal oneness in the union of the two natures.

2. *Else, Only a Human Sympathy.*—If the sufferings of Christ were limited to a mere human consciousness, his sympathy through a law of common suffering with us must be limited to a mere human ground and capacity. Sympathy through suffering must be in the same consciousness in which the suffering was endured. We cannot limit the suffering of Christ to a mere human consciousness and then carry it up into his divine consciousness as a law of sympathy therein. By such limitation neither the suffering nor the sympathy can have any place in the divine. And again the Christ is sundered into two persons, the one divine and the other human, while only the human can sympathize with us through a law of suffering.

3. *An Utterly Insufficient Sympathy.*—A mere human sympathy of Christ, though in the fullest capacity of the human, could not answer for its place in either the Scriptures or the deeper Christian thought and feeling. There was no deification of the human nature assumed in the divine incarnation. Its exaltation and

glorification with the divine Son could not free it from the limitations of the finite. The false assumption of its distinct personal existence must concede it, even in that exaltation and glorification, the limitations of the human. It would follow that the sympathy of Christ through a law of common suffering with us must be subject to human limitations. Therefore his sympathy could not be sufficient for the many instances of suffering and need in the present life. There are two forms of limitation which should receive special notice.

Sympathy is conditioned by the measure of personal knowledge. It can reach no one which the knowledge does not reach; nor can it be more intense than the clearness of the mental apprehension. These facts impose narrow limits upon the capacity of human sympathy. If we determine for the human nature of Christ a distinct human personality, his knowledge must be subject to the limitations of the human. As his sufferings, if limited to a human consciousness, cannot be carried up into the divine consciousness as a law of sympathy therein, so the divine knowledge cannot be brought down into the human mind as the provision of a sympathy which may have the comprehensiveness of the divine. The sympathy of Christ which the Scriptures reveal as through a law of common suffering with us would thus be subject to the limitations of human knowledge. Hence, it could reach but few of the many that need its gracious ministries. Nor could it be intense and constant respecting any. Such is not the sympathy of Christ which the Scriptures reveal.

There is still another law of disability under such limitations. All sympathy through mere human suffering is subject to the laws of time and changing conditions. The trying experiences which lie far back in the years of even the present life give little power of present sympathy with others in like trials. The mother who buried her child twenty years ago cannot have through the memory of her own sorrow the same sympathy with a friend in a like bereavement as the mother who came but yesterday from the burial of her child. The more is all this true as the years subsequent to one's sufferings may be full of new and happy experiences. The same laws must be operative in the future as in the present life. The deep nature of Moses was tenderly responsive to the afflictions of his people; and his sympathy was the deeper as he suffered with them. In the pathos of this sympathy he could pray that, if they might not be spared, he might perish with them.<sup>1</sup> Such a soul was St. Paul's. With a

LAW OF LIMITATION.

ANOTHER LAW OF LIMITATION.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxxii, 32.

like deep nature and sympathy he could wish himself accursed from Christ for the sake of his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh.<sup>1</sup> Neither Moses nor Paul has lost the depth of his nature in the glory of his exaltation; but with the many centuries of blessedness which separate them from their earthly sorrows little power of sympathy through the memory of those sorrows can remain with them. Some personal facts of the present life we may ever carry with us in the full vigor of their reality; but they must be facts of personal conduct which concern ourselves, and cannot be such as mainly constitute the ground of our sympathy with others.

If we limit the sufferings of Christ to a human consciousness, and so determine for him a distinct human personality, there must be the same laws of disability in his sympathy. These consequences cannot be voided by any appeal to his divine nature; for by such limitation we place that nature infinitely above all consciousness of suffering; and therefore we cannot bring it down so as to invigorate the law of his sympathy and lift it above the limitations of all human sympathy. If the sympathy of Christ is subject to such limitations it must ever be a diminishing force, and in the blessedness and glory of his exaltation would already be quite exhausted of its efficiency.

### III. SUFFERING IN A THEANTHROPIC CONSCIOUSNESS.

In the unique personality of Christ, as accepted in the faith of the Church, there is a theanthropic consciousness; and in the experiences of trial and suffering therein we shall find the real and sufficient law of his sympathy.

1. *Concerning a Human Consciousness of the Divine.*—Often a leading question in the orthodox treatment of Christology concerns the human consciousness of the divine in Christ. Many facts in his earlier life appear to us as purely and distinctively human, while later there is seemingly a transition into a higher consciousness, the consciousness of a divine nature. Such facts naturally suggest this question. It is one, however, that should be treated

guardedly; for, otherwise, it may prove itself misleading. It proceeds on the assumption of a distinctively human personality and consciousness in Christ for a longer or shorter period; with some, reaching the time of his baptism or the beginning of his public ministry. In this view, up to such time the incarnate divine nature must have remained in a latent state, or without any manifestation in the consciousness of Christ. Or, if there was any exception, it was only in some transient

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ix, 3.

instance, such as that of his notable conversation with the doctors in the temple.<sup>1</sup> Otherwise, up to the time of his baptism or entrance upon his public ministry his consciousness was simply that of a man, without any recognition of either his great mission or his divine nature.

Such a view of Christ simplifies the interpretation of facts in his earlier life. It would equally simplify the interpretation of many facts of his public life which have a like human cast. But the view is closely kindred to the Nestorian, and may easily lead to a perversion of doctrine respecting the person of Christ. If we start with the assumption of a purely human consciousness, and so of a purely human person of Christ, we may carry the same assumption through his whole life, and he shall be to us two persons, after the Nestorian manner. Even with the admission of a deeper consciousness of the divine in the later life of Christ, it might still be denied that this was the result of a personal union of the two natures in him. Indeed, this union is denied so long as we hold a distinct human consciousness of Christ. While this view could readily interpret some facts of his life, it cannot interpret the communion of divine and human facts in his personal oneness. This personal oneness in the union of the two natures lies in the mystery of the incarnation. In personality Christ is God-man. This is the only doctrine which can interpret and harmonize the Christological facts of Scripture. There is no distinctively human Christ, and therefore no distinctively human consciousness of the divine in Christ.

2. *Divine Consciousness of the Human.*—In the incarnation the divine Son so took the nature of man into personal union with himself as to enter into the consciousness of trials like our own. The facts of the incarnation, as given in the Scriptures and accepted in the faith of the Church, mean such a consciousness. The self-incarnating Son was himself complete in personality, but the human nature which he assumed, while complete as a nature, was without personality. The personality of the Son was not neutralized; nor were his personal attributes compressed into the measure of the human. Wherein, then, lies the reality of the incarnation? Not in a personality of Christ distinct from the personality of the Son. There is no such a personality, and to assume it is to deny the reality of the incarnation. Nor is this reality to be found in the entrance of a human person into such a union with the divine nature as to attain the consciousness of the divine in Christ. There is no such a person in Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Luke ii, 46, 47.

THE VIEW  
NESTORIAN.

THE SON PER-  
SONALLY IN  
CHRIST.

Such a consciousness would be a purely human consciousness, and therefore could not answer for the reality of the incarnation. The incarnation was a divine act, not a human act; and if we would apprehend its reality we must view it on its divine side. Here is the great truth which we previously considered. In the incarnation the divine Son entered personally into the nature of man in a manner to enter into the consciousness of trials like our own. This is the deepest and most luminous truth of the divine incarnation.

The divine consciousness of the human is an intrinsic fact of the theanthropic character of Christ. As we previously pointed out, he is theanthropic in his personality, not in his natures. In his natures he is divine *and* human, but in the unity of personality he is divine-human, God-man. In the unity of personality there must be a unity of consciousness, but in a theanthropic consciousness there must be both divine and human facts. In the theanthropic consciousness of Christ the divine facts come with the divinity of the Son; the human facts, through the human nature in which he was personally incarnated.

3. *A Possibility of the Divine Consciousness.*—A great mystery! But the divine consciousness of facts in the form of human experiences is no greater a mystery than the incarnation itself. Indeed, the profoundest mystery of the incarnation lies in the union of the divine and human natures in the personal oneness of Christ. The

divine is thus brought into new relations. Through new relations there may be new facts of consciousness.

This is often exemplified in human experience. An angel, existing in pure spirituality, or in a corporeity wholly without sensitivity, might still have the consciousness of many facts, but must be without many such as we have. Such an angel might become enshrined in a bodily organism, just in the manner of a human spirit, without any suspension of personal consciousness, but not without many new facts of experience in the form of our own. So in the incarnation the divine Son may have the consciousness of facts in the form of human experiences. We are in possession of no light or principle which can warrant a denial of the possibility of such facts. They must be actual in the very reality of the divine incarnation.

There is a sympathy in God which must witness for the truth which we here maintain. As in our own nature there is a power of sympathy, for the deeper action of which common suffering is a special law, so in the very nature and love of God there is a sympathy with the suffering so true and deep as to manifest the possibility that in the incarnation

NEW FACTS OF  
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MEANING OF  
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the divine Son could so enter into the forms of human trial as to appropriate this special law of sympathy with us. God is not the Absolute of speculative agnosticism, impersonal, without knowledge or sensibility. Even our speculative theology has too often removed God so far away from mankind as to deny to them his real compassion, or invested him with an absoluteness of blessedness which could not be affected by either the joys or woes of men. God is not such a being. He is our Father in heaven. He is love. He has pleasure in our happiness and sympathy with us in our suffering. He suffers with us. This is the meaning of his compassion, which the Scriptures so frequently and earnestly express.

If God is such in himself, and such in his sympathy with us, we should not stumble at the doctrine of the sympathy of Christ which we have maintained. The chief objection urged against it is that it is contradictory to the absolute divine blessedness. This objection vanishes before the character of God as revealed in the Scriptures. The gift of the Son for the redemption of the world means a stress of sacrifice in the consciousness of the Father. How else can we interpret the expressions of his love in that gift? God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son; spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; sent his own Son to be the propitiation for our sins.<sup>1</sup> If this gift of the Son was without stress of sacrifice in the consciousness of the Father, what mean these intense expressions of his love? There could be no such love in the gift of the Son without a stress of sacrifice in the giving. In the presence of such a fact of divine sacrifice it must be admitted that the incarnate Son could enter into the consciousness of trials like our own, and so appropriate the deepest law of sympathy with us.

There are facts in the redeeming work of Christ which mean, and must mean, such a law of sympathy with us. It was the Son who, though he was rich, for our sake became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich;<sup>2</sup> who was in the form of God, and equal with him in glory, but parted with that glory and took instead the form of a servant in the likeness of men, and humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross.<sup>3</sup> In these facts we must admit a stress of sacrifice infinitely profound, or assume an utter indifference of the Son 'as between these states. If the state of poverty was the same to his consciousness as the state of riches which he surrendered, the form of a servant in the likeness of men the same as the glory of the Father in which he dwelt and with

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 16; Rom. viii, 32; 1 John iv, 10.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. viii, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. ii, 6-8.

which he parted, then there was for him no stress of sacrifice in the profound facts of his redeeming work. If it be so, what can these intense words mean? Nothing; really nothing. Indeed, they can mean nothing less than a profound sacrifice of the Son in the work of redemption—a sacrifice fully apprehended in his divine consciousness.

Mostly, our orthodox theology lays aright the foundation of our soteriology. The Son of God, truly and essentially divine, is the Saviour. The Scriptures emphasize the fact that the Son is the Saviour; <sup>1</sup> so that there is no reason, no excuse even, for any halting or divergence at this point. That the Son may save us he incarnates himself in our nature, takes it into personal union with himself. Now, the Son incarnate is the Christ Jesus of the Gospel; a theanthropic person. All this is accepted and maintained. But in the further exposition of our soteriology Christ in his work of redemption begins to appear quite distinct from the person of the Son. It is forgotten that there is no theanthropic Christ except as the incarnate Son enters into the consciousness of experiences like our own. Even the possibility of such a consciousness is denied. Then the human nature of Christ begins to be viewed as a human person, quite distinct from the divine nature, and as the conscious subject, and the only conscious subject, of the vicarious sufferings whereby the world was redeemed. This is a wide departure from the accepted doctrine of the person of Christ, and ends in the notion of the redemption of the world by the sacrifice of a man. It was not a man, but his own Son, that the Father sent to be the Saviour of the world; and the Son was consciously present and operative in all the work of its redemption; consciously participant in the deepest sorrows of Gethsemane and in that bitterest outcry on Calvary. All this is in the accepted doctrine of the person of Christ, in the reality of the divine incarnation, and in the sense of Scripture.

We have no insight into the mystery of such facts. They lie in the depths of the divine incarnation. We attempt no philosophy of the manner in which the divine Son entered into the consciousness of trials like our own. We do not even intimate any form of physical pain, such as we suffer. We simply maintain the deep and manifest truth of Scripture, that in the incarnation the divine Son entered into the consciousness of trials like our own, and through such trials appropriated the deepest law of sympathy with us.

4. *Real Ground of the Sympathy of Christ.*—We thus reach the

<sup>1</sup> John iii. 16, 17; 1 John iv, 9, 14.



very sure ground of the sympathy of Christ as it is revealed in the Scriptures and apprehended in the deepest Christian thought and feeling. This ground does not lie in the experiences of a mere human consciousness, with all the limitations and disabilities of the human. Nor is it subject to the law of time and changing conditions, as the grounds of all human sympathy must be. The trials of Christ which constitute the ground of his sympathy have their place in his theanthropic consciousness. Therein they ever abide, and for all the requirements of his sympathy are living facts still, just as they were in the hours of his trial.

Such a sympathy of Christ is sufficient for its place in the Scriptures and for the exigencies of Christian experience. It is free from all the limitations of a merely human sympathy, and with its grateful ministries can reach all cases of need. Mere human sympathy, even in its deepest intensity, must often consume itself in kindly yearnings while it is powerless for any effective ministry. Many could weep with Martha and Mary, but could not reach the depth of their grief. Jesus wept, and turned their sorrow into joy. In him an infinite efficiency combines with an infinite depth of sympathy.

5. *Light on the Person of Christ.*—It should be remembered that we took the sympathy of Christ into our discussion, not only because it is an important truth of Christology, but specially for the reason of its intimate relation to the question of his personality. In the progress of the discussion we have seen that this relation is, indeed, most intimate. We found that his sympathy is grounded in a law of common suffering with us. In his life we found many facts of trial and suffering in the likeness of our own; but a deeper study discovered their insufficiency for the requirements of his sympathy, if they are restricted to a mere human consciousness. In this case his sympathy could be only human, and therefore utterly insufficient for its place in the Scriptures and for the needs of Christian experience. We further found that only as these forms of trial and suffering were apprehended in a divine consciousness could they constitute in Christ a sufficient ground for his sympathy.

It is here that we find in the sympathy of Christ the true doctrine of his personality. He must be a theanthropic person, else he could not have the consciousness of trial and suffering which is necessary to his sympathy. He is a theanthropic person as in personal oneness he unites a human nature with his divine nature and through the human enters into the consciousness

of trial and suffering like our own. The theanthropic consciousness of Christ is the central truth of his personality.

Literature.—Pearson : *Exposition of the Creed*, articles ii, iii ; Hooker : *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book v, secs. 51-54 ; Waterland : *The Athanasian Creed*, Works, vol. iii ; Owen : *The Person of Christ*, Works (Goold's), vol. i ; Martensen : *Christian Dogmatics*, secs. 125-147 ; Dorner : *System of Christian Doctrine*, vol. iii ; *Doctrine of the Person of Christ* ; Luthardt : *The Saving Truths of Christianity*, lect. iv ; Usher : *On the Incarnation* ; Hovey : *God With Us* ; Wilberforce : *On the Incarnation* ; Pope : *The Person of Christ* ; Gess : *The Person of Christ* ; Goodwin, Henry M. : *Christ and Humanity* ; Goodwin, Thomas : *Christ the Mediator* ; Schmid : *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, part i ; Ullmann : *The Sinlessness of Jesus* ; Bruce : *The Humiliation of Christ* ; Plumptre : *Christ and Christendom*, Boyle Lectures, 1867 ; Medd : *The One Mediator*, Bampton Lectures, 1882 ; Du Bose : *The Soteriology of the New Testament* ; Gore : *The Incarnation of the Son of God*, Bampton Lectures, 1891 ; Schaff : *The Person of Christ* ; Neander : *History of the Church*, vol. ii, pp. 424-557 ; Hefele : *History of Church Councils*, book xi.

CHAPTER V.

LEADING ERRORS IN CHRISTOLOGY.

THE treatment of Christological errors is specially the work of historical theology; yet some attention to them is proper in a system of doctrines. We may thus set in a clearer light the true doctrine of the person of Christ. However, a brief presentation of the leading errors is all that we require and all that we attempt.

I. EARLIER ERRORS.

While it is convenient to make the general distinction between the earlier and later Christological errors, a chronological order is not important in the treatment of the errors as classed in the two divisions. Here it is better to observe, as far as practicable, a logical order.

1. *Ebionism*.—The Ebionites were probably so named by an opprobrious application to them of a Hebrew word which means poor; but not on account of their low and impoverished views of Christ, as some have held. Ebionism was a strongly Judaized form of Christianity. This is true as a general characterization. However, Ebionism represents several sects, with different Christological tenets. There were two leading sects: the Essene and the Pharisaic. The Essene Ebionites held the Mosaic law to be obligatory on all Jewish Christians, but did not require its observance by Gentile Christians. Therefore they accepted the apostleship and teaching of St. Paul. The Pharisaic Ebionites held that all Christians must observe the law of Moses, the Gentile no less than the Jewish. Therefore they repudiated the apostleship and teaching of St. Paul. They were his virulent and persistent opposers and persecutors.

Both sects held Christ to be the promised Messiah, but their notion of him was the low, secularized notion of the Jew. But, with agreement on this point, the two sects differed on others. The Essene held the miraculous conception of Christ, while the Pharisaic held him to be the son of Joseph and Mary by natural generation. The former of these views is in close identity with the earlier Socinianism; the latter in a like identity with a more modern humanitarianism, which holds Christ to be a

SEVERAL  
SECTS.

NOTION OF  
CHRIST.

man, just as others, whatever moral superiority may be conceded him. With these statements the errors of Ebionism in Christology are manifest. The divinity of Christ and the divine incarnation in him are both denied.<sup>1</sup>

2. *Gnosticism*.—No doubt the term Gnostic had its ground in the Greek word *γνώσις*. As appropriated by the Gnostics it meant the profession of a high order of knowledge. As knowledge is possible, such a claim is not necessarily groundless; but it may mean, and with the Gnostics did mean, the profession of a peculiar insight into great problems which lie beyond the grasp of other minds. They dealt freely, and with much pretension of knowledge, with the profoundest questions. We may instance the world-ground or absolute being; all secondary or finite existences; the mode of their derivation from the absolute; the origin of evil and the mode of the world's redemption. Mostly, however, their treatment of these great questions was in a purely speculative mode. Hypothesis and deduction were in the freest use. Deduction, however, must be kept within its own sphere, and proceed only from grounds or principles of unquestionable truth. The Gnostics were heedless of these imperative laws, carried their speculations into spheres where induction is the only appropriate method, and proceeded from the merest hypotheses or assumptions. With such methods in view the vagaries of Gnosticism should cause no surprise.

Gnosticism divided into various schools. This was an inevitable consequence of its purely speculative method. It was also made certain by the diverse influences to which its speculations were subject. “The principal sources of Gnosticism may probably be summed up in these three. To Platonism, modified by Judaism, it owed much of its philosophical form and tendencies. To the dualism of the Persian religion it owed one form at least of its speculations on the origin and remedy of evil, and many of the details of its doctrine of emanations. To the Buddhism of India, modified again probably by Platonism, it was indebted for the doctrines of the antagonism between spirit and matter and the unreality of derived existence (the germ of the Gnostic Docetism), and, in part at least, for the theory which regards the universe as a series of successive emanations from the absolute

<sup>1</sup> Burton: *Heresies of the Apostolic Age*, Bampton Lectures, 1829, lect. iii; Reuss: *Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age*, book i, chap. ix; Neander: *History of the Church*, vol. i, pp. 344–353; Schaff: *History of the Christian Church*, vol. ii, pp. 431–442, 1886; Dorner: *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, div. i, vol. i, pp. 188–217.

unity.”<sup>1</sup> Theories would thus take form just as one source of influence or another predominated, or according to the elements combined in their construction.

It is already apparent that leading tenets of the Gnostic heresy flourished in different philosophies long before the Christian era. As a heresy in Christianity it began its evil work while the apostles yet lived and wrote. There are many references to it in the New Testament, particularly in the writings of St. John. It is every-where reprehended as false in doctrine, evil in practice, and corrupt in influence. These characterizations are not limited to its evils as then manifest, but are prophetic of far greater evils in a future not remote. The truth of these prophecies was fully verified in the early history of the Church.

There were two principles of Gnosticism which led to an utterly false doctrine of the person of Christ. These were the tenets of emanation and the intrinsically evil nature of matter. God was not a creator of the universe, but the source of emanations. In this mode all things have proceeded from him. But this process is on a descending scale; so that even the first emanation must be inferior to the original ground of all things. Hence, wherever Christ is placed in the scale of emanated existences, even though it were at the top, he cannot be truly divine. The other tenet that matter is intrinsically evil, and corruptive of all spiritual being in contact with it, was common to the different schools of Gnosticism, and led to a denial of the divine incarnation. That is, Gnosticism denied the reality of the human nature of Christ. What in him seemed a real body was not such in fact, but a mere phantasm or appearance. It was on this ground that the Gnostics were often called Docetæ, from *δοκέω*, to seem or appear. If there was no reality in the bodily form of Christ, of course there was no divine incarnation in him.

It was in view of this heresy as an evil already at work, and as seen in prophetic vision, soon to become a far greater evil, that St. John opened his gospel with a doctrine of the Logos, which could mean nothing less than his essential divinity, and asserted in a manner so definite the reality of his incarnation.<sup>2</sup> It was in the same view that he wrote in his epistles: “And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” “For many deceivers are entered into

AT WORK IN  
APOSTOLIC  
TIMES.

PERVERTING  
PRINCIPLES.

EMANATION.

EVIL NATURE  
OF MATTER.

DENOUNCED IN  
SCRIPTURE.

<sup>1</sup> Mansel: *The Gnostic Heresies*, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> John i, 1-3, 14.

the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."<sup>1</sup> It is obvious that such texts are in direct reprobation of certain principles of the Gnostics, which determine for them an utterly false doctrine of the person of Christ. According to these principles he could be neither divine nor an incarnation of divinity in our nature.<sup>2</sup>

3. *Arianism*.—The term Arianism was derived from Arius, who became the representative of certain doctrinal views regarded as heretical. Arius was a presbyter of the Church of Alexandria, early in the fourth century, and a man of influence. He set forth and maintained views at issue with the accepted doctrine of the Trinity; but the real point of the issue concerned the divinity of the Son. When, in an assembly of his clergy, Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, maintained the eternity of the Son, Arius openly opposed him, and maintained that in the very nature of his relation to the Father, the Son could not be eternal. This position could not remain as the whole adverse view. It involved doctrinal consequences which could not be avoided, and which, therefore, were soon accepted and maintained. If the Son was not eternal, then there was a time when he was not. This consequence was accepted and avowed. If the Son was not eternal, then his existence must have originated in an optional will of the Father, and either in the mode of generation or in that of creation. These consequences were also accepted; but respecting the actual mode of the Son's origin the earlier Arianism was vacillating or indefinite. Later, the mode of creation was more in favor. Thus, the Son was held to be of creaturely character. The departure from the orthodox faith was really the same, whichever view of his origin was maintained. A being originating in time, and by an optional act of God, whatever the mode of his operation, could not be truly divine. This consequence was fully accepted.

The results of these views respecting the doctrines of the Trinity and the person of Christ are obvious. They are utterly subversive of both. The truth of the Trinity imperatively requires the essential divinity of the Son. He must be con-

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv, 3; 2 John 7.

<sup>2</sup> Burton: *Heresies of the Apostolic Age*, Bampton Lectures, 1829; Mansel: *The Gnostic Heresies*; Norton: *History of the Gnostics*; Lightfoot: *Commentary on Colossians*, pp. 73-113; Ueberweg: *History of Philosophy*, § 77; Reuss: *Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age*, book iii, chaps. ix, x; Neander: *History of the Church*, vol. i, pp. 366-478; Dorner: *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, div. i, vol. i, pp. 218-252; King: *The Gnostics and their Remains*. An appendix to King's book gives very fully the literature of the subject.

substantial with the Father, and his personal subsistence must be in the mode of an eternal generation, not by any optional act of the Father. A true doctrine of the person of Christ equally requires the essential divinity of the Son. Hence Arianism subverts the deepest truth of the person of Christ. When the Son NO DIVINE INCARNATION. is reduced to a temporal existence, to a finite being, to the plane of a creature, there can be no divine incarnation in Christ, no theanthropic character of Christ. No attribution of greatness to the Son can obviate these consequences. Arianism may declare him, as it did, the head of creation, and far above all other creatures, so far as to be like God ; but all this avails nothing because such likeness means, and is intended to mean, that he is not God, and that the divine nature is not in him. No more relief comes with the ascription to the Son of the whole work of creation. Relief might thus come if this work were allowed to mean what it really means for the divinity of the Son ; but there is no relief so long as Arianism denies his divinity and reduces him to the plane of a creature. The contradictory ascription of FALSE CHRISTOLOGY. the work of creation to the Son, after he is reduced to the plane of a creature, leaves Arianism in the utter subversion of the truth respecting the person of Christ.'

4. *Apollinarianism*.—The Apollinarian Christology was so named from Apollinaris, Bishop of Laodicea, and was disseminated in the fourth century. Its distinctive characteristic is that it denies to Christ the possession of a human mind. Necessarily, GROUNDING IN TRICHOTOMY. therefore, the theory grounded itself in a trichotomic anthropology. Man was assumed to consist of three distinct natures, body, soul, and spirit—*σῶμα, ψυχὴ, πνεῦμα*. In the theory body and mind were held in their usual meaning : the former as the physical nature ; the latter as the rational and moral nature. The peculiarity of the theory was in the meaning given to the psyche or soul. This was held to be a distinct nature, intermediate between the physical and mental, and the seat of the sensuous or animal life. Provision was thus made for the theory of a partial incarnation. If man consists of three distinct natures it was possible that in the incarnation the Son should assume two of these natures and omit the third. It was assumed, accordingly, that the rational and moral

<sup>1</sup> Newman, Cardinal : *Arians of the Fourth Century* ; Gwatkin : *The Arian Controversy* ; Waterland : *Defense of the Divinity of Christ ; A Second Defense of Christ's Divinity*, Works, vol. ii ; Cunningham : *Historical Theology*, vol. i, pp. 276-293 ; Gieseler : *Eccelesiastical History*, vol. i, pp. 294-322 ; Schaff : *History of the Christian Church*, vol. iii, §§ 119-125, 1886 ; Dorner : *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, div. i, vol. ii, pp. 201-241.

nature was omitted, and that the Son united with himself merely the physical and psychic natures of man.

With such limitation of the human nature assumed in the incarnation, or the omission of the mental nature, the theory must account for the rational and moral facts, such as have a human cast, in the life of Christ. The account was attempted on the assumption that the incarnate Logos so fulfilled the functions of a rational mind in Christ as to account for this class of facts in his life.

While trichotomy provides for a partial incarnation, it is the necessary ground of a Christology which makes such limitation fundamental. If man is only dichotomic in his natures, there is no place for such a Christology. However, the refutation of Apollinarianism is not to be most readily achieved through the refutation of trichotomy. While the Scriptures are seemingly in favor of dichotomy, yet they are not decisive, as appeared in our discussion of that question. Nor can the question be concluded in any scientific or philosophic mode. On the other hand, there is here a fatal weakness of the Apollinarian Christology. In the first place, it is unable to establish the truth of trichotomy, which yet is its necessary ground. In the next place, the established truth of trichotomy could not conclude the Apollinarian Christology; indeed, could not furnish any proof of it.

The disproof of this Christology lies in the historic life of Christ. The facts of a rational and moral life in the cast of the human are as manifest therein as the facts of a psychic life, as here distinguished from the rational and moral. The presence of a human mind in Christ is the necessary ground and the only rational account of these facts. They cannot be accounted for simply by the presence of the incarnate Logos. To assume this possibility would be to assume the compression of his divine attributes into the limits of the human, after the manner of the modern kenoticism. Then there could no longer be a divine incarnation. The humanization of the Logos in Christ contradicts the deepest truth of the incarnation, which lies in the divine consciousness of the human. If the divine is in any way changed into the human there can no longer be a divine consciousness of the human.

The reality of the divine incarnation is itself the disproof of the Apollinarian Christology. The assumption of a human nature without the rational mind could not be an incarnation in the nature of man. The mind is so much of man that without it there is no true human nature. Nor could the



self-incarnating Son, with such limitation of the nature assumed, so enter into the consciousness of experiences like our own as to be in all points tempted like as we are, and thus appropriate the deepest law of his sympathy with us. Our deepest trials and our deepest exigencies of experience lie in our rational and moral nature; therefore it was necessary that he should take this nature into personal union with himself. Only in this mode could he share the consciousness of such experiences and so appropriate the law of his profoundest sympathy with us.<sup>1</sup>

5. *Nestorianism*.—The term Nestorianism is derived from the name of Nestorius, and means the doctrine of two persons in Christ. This doctrine was propagated early in the fifth century, and at one time very widely prevailed, particularly in the Eastern Church. Nestorius, whose name is so responsibly connected with the doctrine, was a presbyter of Antioch, NESTORIUS. and, later, Patriarch of Constantinople, and a man of eminence and moral worth. However, he was not the author of the Christological view so directly connected with his name. The true authorship was with Theodore of Mopsuestia, but his doctrine found able advocates in his former pupils, Nestorius and Theodoret, the latter, Bishop of Cyrus.

While it was a special aim of the Apollinarian doctrine to make sure of the oneness of the person of Christ, it was NESTORIANISM. equally the aim of the Nestorian doctrine to make sure of the integrity of his two natures, particularly of his human nature. Each made an unnecessary sacrifice of vital truth in order to the attainment of its aim: the former, of the integrity of the human nature of Christ; the latter, of the unity of his personality in the union of the two natures. It is true that the DUALISM IN CHRIST. leaders of Nestorianism, such as we have named, claimed to hold the personal oneness of Christ, or denied the dualism with which Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, and others charged them. Cyril was their chief opponent. Their doctrine of the union of the Logos with the human nature in Christ fell far short of the requirement of his personal oneness, and left the human in the mode of a distinct and complete human personality. “They THE UNION NOT PERSONAL. called it an inhabitation; and the general nature of the inhabitation, as distinct from that by which God dwells in all men, through his omnipresent essence and energy, they indicated by the

<sup>1</sup> Neander : *History of the Church*, vol. iii, pp. 428–434; Schaff : *History of the Christian Church*, vol. iii, § 136; Plumptre : *Christ and Christendom*, Appendix H; Hagenbach : *History of Doctrines*, § 99; Dorner : *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, div. i, vol. ii, pp. 351–398.

phrase 'by good pleasure' (*καθ' εὐδοκίαν*); and this indwelling by good pleasure in Christ they further discriminated from God's indwelling in other good men, by representing it as attaining in him the highest possible degree. This indwelling of the Logos in Christ was also said to be according to foreknowledge, the Logos choosing the man Jesus to be in a peculiar sense his temple, because he knew beforehand what manner of man he should be. . . . Among other phrases current in the same school were such as these: union by conjunction; union by relation, as in the case of husband and wife; union in worth, honor, authority; union by consent of will; union by community of name, and so forth; for it were endless to enumerate the Nestorian tropes or modes of union."<sup>1</sup> No such union of the divine nature with the human assumed in the incarnation is here expressed, or even allowed, as will answer for the personal oneness of Christ. Therefore, while Nestorianism might repudiate the doctrine of two persons in Christ, it could not free itself from the implication of such a doctrine.

The disproof of Nestorianism lies in the proofs of the personal oneness of Christ in the union of the divine and human natures. These proofs were given in the treatment of that question; hence they need not here be repeated. Further, this doctrine, as the Apollinarian, and even more fully, is refuted by the reality of the divine incarnation. The great texts adduced in the treatment of that question mean, and must mean, that the divine Son took the nature of man into a personal union with himself; so that of the two natures so united there is one Christ, very God-man. The Nestorian Christology must deny the reality of the divine incarnation, and, therefore, must be false to the Christology of the Scriptures.<sup>2</sup>

6. *Eutychianism*.—This error is coupled with the name of Eutyches, a monk without other distinction, unless we reckon to his account a notable lack of culture, an intense love of debate, and an extreme doggedness. He is not reckoned the author of this Christological error, though he may have contributed something toward its extreme form. His intense activity in the propagation of the doctrine seems to be the only reason for its bearing his name.

<sup>1</sup> Bruce: *The Humiliation of Christ*, pp. 48, 49.

<sup>2</sup> Hefele: *History of Church Councils*, book ix, chaps. i, ii; Schaff: *History of the Christian Church*, vol. iii, §§ 137-139, 1886; Neander: *History of the Church*, vol. iii, pp. 446-524; Cunningham: *Historical Theology*, vol. i, pp. 315-320; Gieseler: *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i, pp. 343-355; Hagenbach: *History of Doctrines*, § 100; Dorner: *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, div. ii, vol. i, pp. 25-79.

Eutyichianism is monophysitic as it respects the nature of Christ; that is, that as the incarnate Logos Christ possessed but one nature. This view was in direct contradiction to the Chalcedonian symbol, which so formally declared that in him there were two complete, unmixed, and unchanged natures, the human and the divine. Eutyichianism admitted the reality of the divine incarnation, and the incipient duality of the natures, but denied that their distinction remained in Christ. Just when, and in what mode, the distinction ceased, and the two natures became one, are questions on which the doctrine was quite indefinite. Respecting the time, it was held that it might have been instant with the incarnation, or at the baptism of Christ, or after his resurrection. Nor was the theory less indefinite respecting the change in the natures whereby the two became one. Whether the divine was humanized, or the human deified, or the two so mixed and compounded as to constitute a nature neither human nor divine was not determined, though the stronger tendency was toward the view of the deification of the human nature. In this view Christ was wholly divine. The human nature was transmuted into the divine, or absorbed by the divine, as a drop of honey is absorbed by the ocean. Such an illustration was in frequent use for the expression of the change to which the human nature assumed in the incarnation was subject and the monophysitic result determined. Much is thus expressed. The drop of honey absorbed by the ocean would no longer be a drop of honey; nor would it be distinguishable from the body of the ocean. Hence the frequent use of such an illustration fully justifies our statement, that the doctrine strongly tended to the view of a deification of the human nature in Christ.

MONOPHYSITIC.

TIME OF CHANGE.

NATURE OF CHANGE.

It seems quite needless to subject such a doctrine to the tests of criticism. Unless this change is held to have occurred at least as late as the ascension of Christ, the doctrine is openly contradicted by the daily facts of his life. We may as readily question his divinity as his humanity. His life is replete with facts so thoroughly in the east of the human that he must have possessed a human nature; for otherwise these facts have no rational or possible account. Besides, if the human nature assumed by the divine was so transmuted or absorbed, the incarnation loses its own true, deep meaning and assumes a purely docetic form. Thus all grounds of the atonement and of the sympathy of Christ through a law of common suffering with us are utterly swept away. It may suffice to add that such a transmutation of the human nature into the divine is an absolute impossibility. We mean by

FALSE TO CHRISTOLOGICAL FACTS.

this that it is not within the power of God. This must be manifest to any mind which takes the proposition into clear thought.<sup>1</sup>

## II. LATER ERRORS.

A review of all the modern phases of Christological error would be tedious, and without compensatory result. It will suffice that we consider some of the leading forms of such error.

1. *The Socinian Christology*.—Socinianism, as a system of theology, originated in the sixteenth century, and took its designation from Lælius Socinus, an Italian, but who spent most of his active life in Poland, because he there found more liberty in the propagation of his peculiar doctrinal views. However, while the original of this system is with Lælius Socinus, his nephew, Faustus Socinus, born 1539, more fully developed and propagated it, and first formed the converts to this faith into a distinct religious body, so that he may properly be regarded as one of the founders of Socinianism.

We here need only the most summary statement of its doctrinal tenets. Mostly, the Scriptures were admitted to be of divine origin, but rather as containing than as being a divine revelation. A strong rationalistic principle was held as a law of biblical exegesis. It was in this mode that Socinianism provided for itself so much liberty of interpretation, that it might the easier wrest the Scriptures from the proof of the orthodox faith and maintain its own opposing views. With all this rationalism, the earlier Socinianism admitted the supernatural in Christianity, particularly in its Christology. It held the miraculous conception of Christ; that he was the subject of supernatural moral and spiritual endowments, and that he was temporarily taken to heaven in order to a better preparation for his great work in the redemption of the world. As Socinianism denied the divinity of Christ, so it denied the doctrine of the Trinity. Its anthropology was Pelagian, and its soteriology admitted no other ground or power of human salvation than the moral influence of the life and lessons of Christ.

With these tenets of doctrine in hand, the Christology of the system is easily stated. With all the concession of supernatural facts, as previously stated, the Christ of Socinianism is a man, nothing more. True, he was declared to be more than man, but no sufficient ground was given, or even

<sup>1</sup> Hefele : *History of Church Councils*, book x, chap. ii; Neander : *History of the Church*, vol. iii, pp. 504-511; Schaff : *History of the Christian Church*, vol. iii, §§ 140-145, 1886; Hooker : *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book v, §§ 52-54; Dorner : *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, div. ii, vol. i, pp. 79-119.

admitted, for the truth of the declaration. No supernatural fact conceded, nor all combined, could raise him in his own nature or being above the plane of the human. No other ground is given for the assertion that he was more than man. In its Christology, therefore, Socinianism was substantially the same as the old Ebionism. In many instances of its later purely rationalistic or Unitarian forms it has degenerated from the higher views of Christ with which it began.

The Christology of Socinianism is utterly false to the Christology of the Scriptures. It denies the divinity of Christ; FALSE TO THE SCRIPTURES. the reality of the divine incarnation; the union of the two natures in the personal oneness of Christ. All ground of the atonement is excluded from the system.<sup>1</sup>

2. *The Lutheran Christology.*—This error lies in the ascription of divine attributes, particularly of omnipresence, to the human nature of Christ. Only in an omnipresence or, at least, multipresence of his human nature could the Lutheran Christology answer to the doctrine of consubstantiation—the doctrine of the presence and communion of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament of the supper. If in this supper the communicants really partake of the body and blood of Christ, then in some real sense, however obscure its mode, he must be present in his human nature, and, therefore, he must be present in many places at the same time. This is not denied by those who hold the doctrine of the real presence; indeed, it is affirmed.

It has often been said by divines who controvert the Christology of the Lutherans that its construction was determined by the requirements of their doctrine of the real presence. RELATION TO CONSUBSTANTIATION. Lutherans, however, deny this, and maintain that their doctrine of the person of Christ was constructed directly upon the ground of the Scriptures, and in the proper interpretation of their Christological facts; yet it is admitted that the one doctrine confirms the other and sets it in a clearer light. Thus, Dr. Gerhart having maintained that the Lutheran doctrine of the person of Christ “was developed from the Lutheran theory of the sacrament,”<sup>2</sup> Dr. Krauth replies: “If Dr. Gerhart means no

<sup>1</sup> Dorner: *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, div. ii, vol. ii, pp. 249–265; Cunningham: *Historical Theology*, chap. xxiii; Owen: *Works* (Goold's), vol. xii. The utter falsity of this and all other forms of Christology grounded in the mere humanity of Christ is fully shown in discussions of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ, to which reference was given under our own treatment of these questions.

<sup>2</sup> *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1863.

more than that God in his providence made the discussions in regard to the Lord's Supper the means of bringing more fully and harmoniously into a well-defined consciousness and into clearer expression the doctrine of the Scriptures in regard to the person of Christ, we do not object to it; but if he means that the doctrine of our Church on the person of Christ originated in the necessity of defending her doctrine in regard to the Lord's Supper, we think he is wholly mistaken. The doctrine of our Church rests upon the direct testimony of God's word; and her interpretation of the meaning of that word is not one of her own devising, but had been given ages before her great distinctive confession, by the fathers and councils of the pure Church."<sup>1</sup>

Theologians of any distinct Christian communion have the right of stating their own case on any such issue; but they have no final authority. That the Lutheran doctrine of the person of Christ was the doctrine of the early fathers and councils is rejected as groundless. Further, it is in the truth of doctrinal history that the Christology of the Lutheran Church has ever been associated with her doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the sacrament of the supper, and that mostly the former has been treated as secondary or subordinate to the latter. It is true that Dorner concedes to Luther a construction of his Christology independently of his doctrine of the Lord's Supper, but he also says this: "During the sixteenth century it was the doctrine of the supper that gave its direction and character to the concrete development of Christology."<sup>2</sup> The Lutheran doctrine is greatly lacking in clearness. Nor is this to be thought strange, especially in view of its peculiar tenets.

Further, Lutherans have differed widely among themselves, and this fact greatly hinders the clear apprehension of the doctrine. The contentions on this question within the Lutheran Church were quite equal to those which she maintained with Papists, Zwinglians, and Calvinists. There were two schools of special prominence in these interior doctrinal issues: one in the following of Brentz; the other in the following of Chemnitz. There were other schools, each with its own doctrine, and for which it contended against all opposing views. Among the contending parties there were real differences of doctrine. These contentions were fruitful of much evil. This came to be so clearly seen and deeply felt as to awaken an intense desire for peace and a harmony of doctrinal views. The attainment of these ends was

<sup>1</sup> *The Conservative Reformation and its Theology*, p. 502.

<sup>2</sup> *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, div. ii, vol. ii, p. 301.

earnestly attempted. The *Formula of Concord* was the product of this endeavor. The aim was good, but the result brought little satisfaction. The desiderated concord was not attained. Divisions were rather increased than diminished. There was still a Brentzian doctrine, and still a Chemnitzian doctrine. Others were added, notably a Giessen doctrine, and a Tübingen doctrine. There were others, but enough have been named to show the persistence and prevalence of the strife. These facts of division and disputation not only hinder the clear apprehension of the Lutheran Christology, but clearly point to peculiar difficulties of the doctrine, and really disprove it.

Where shall we find the doctrine? Naturally, we turn first to the Augsburg Confession; but it is not given in the article which directly concerns this question.<sup>1</sup> In the article on the Lord's Supper some facts are given which, if true in themselves, must be determinative of some vital elements of the doctrine.<sup>2</sup> We note specially the alleged facts that the body and blood of Christ are truly present with the bread and wine, and are communicated to those who partake of the supper. But the determination of the doctrine of the person of Christ from the contents of this article would subordinate it to the doctrine of the supper in a manner to which Lutheran divines strongly object.

The *Formula of Concord*, while giving a later formulation of the doctrine, and the latest with any claim to authority, still leaves us in uncertainty, and for two reasons: one, that this statement was a compromise among opposing parties; the other, that it has not been held in any unity of faith. Yet we know not any better source to which we may look for the Lutheran doctrine.

Much of the article on the person of Christ is in full accord with the Chalcedonian symbol, but it contains elements which are peculiar to the Lutheran doctrine.<sup>3</sup> These appear in the ascription of divine attributes to the human nature of Christ. It is not meant that the human nature is deified in any Eutychian sense, but that by virtue of the union of the two natures in Christ the human possesses the attributes of the divine. This is the sense of the *communicatio idiomatum*, the communion of the attributes of the two natures in Christ. It seems obvious that, if the union is such that the human should possess the attributes of the divine, then, conversely, the divine should possess the attributes of the human. This, however, is denied. Omniscience, omnipotence, and ubiquity are the divine attributes which are more specially ascribed to the human nature of Christ. "Therefore now not only as God, but also as man, he

<sup>1</sup> Article iii.

<sup>2</sup> Article x.

<sup>3</sup> Article viii.

knows all things, can do all things, is present to all creatures, has under his feet and in his hand all things which are in heaven, in the earth, and under the earth." These facts are central to the Christology of the article, and other facts affirmed are in full accord with them. "What the divine has in its essence and of itself, the human has and exercises through the divine, in consequence of its personal union with it. We might imitate one of our Lord's own deep expressions in characterizing it, and might suppose him to say: 'As my divine nature hath omnipresence in itself, so hath it given to my human nature to have omnipresence in itself.'"<sup>1</sup> If the union of the two natures is valid ground for the omnipresence of the human, the same union must be equally valid for its omniscience and omnipotence.

The statement of such a doctrine seems entirely sufficient for its refutation. The human nature assumed by the Logos in the incarnation remained human, with the attributes of the human. In itself it possessed the capacity for only such knowledge, power, and presence as are possible to the human. How then could it become omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent? The answer is, through the divine nature with which it was united. But if this union answers for such results, either it must give to the finite attributes of the human nature the plenitude of the infinite, or invest that nature with the attributes of the infinite. Attributes of knowledge, power, and presence, such as we here contemplate, are concrete realities of being, not mere notions or names. There can be neither knowledge, nor power, nor presence without the appropriate attribute of being. The being must answer for the character of the attribute, and the attribute must answer for all that is affirmed of it. Only a mind possessing the power of absolute knowing can be omniscient. Omnipotence must have its ground in a will of absolute power. Omnipresence, such as the Lutheran Christology affirms of the human nature of Christ, is possible only with an infinite extension of being. Hence, either the finite attributes of the human nature assumed by the Logos must be lifted into the infinitude of the divine attributes, or the divine attributes must be invested in the human nature, which is intrinsically finite, and which in itself, even as the Lutheran Christology concedes, must ever remain finite.

It is at this point that the doctrine encounters insuperable difficulties, even absolute impossibilities. There is no possibility that the human nature of Christ should possess the attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence

ASSUMED IM-  
POSSIBILITIES.

<sup>1</sup> Krauth: *The Conservative Reformation and its Theology*, p. 479.



which the Lutheran Christology ascribes to it. It is properly regarded as an axiom that the finite has not a capacity for the infinite—*finitum non capax infiniti*. The principle is absolutely true in application to the points which we here make. The finite attributes of the human nature can neither be enlarged to the infinitude of the divine attributes nor receive into themselves the plenitude of the divine. Neither can the finite nature of man receive the investment of these divine attributes. But there can be no omniscience without the attribute of absolute knowing; no omnipotence without a will of absolute power; no omnipresence of being without an infinite extension. Here are the impossibilities which the Lutheran Christology encounters in the ascription of such attributes to the human nature of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

3. *The Kenotic Christology*.—The seed-thought of kenoticism in Christology is credited to Zinzendorf, but it remained fruitless for a long time after he cast it forth. In later years his thought has been developed into doctrinal form. Indeed, there are several forms of this development. Professor Bruce has carefully noted four leading types of the doctrine, as severally represented by Thomasius, Gess, Ebrard, and Martensen.<sup>2</sup> With this classification he proceeds to a careful statement and critical review of each type. A study of this discussion is helpful toward a clear insight into the kenotic Christology. We, however, are mainly concerned with the deeper tenets of the doctrine.

Kenoticism is the doctrine that in the incarnation the Logos emptied himself of his divine attributes, or compressed them into the measure and cast of the human; that he parted with his omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence, and subjected himself to the limitations of a merely human life. These are the central ideas of the doctrine, though not all kenoticists hold so extreme a view.

Whether in the incarnation the Logos assumed a human soul as well as a body, or whether in his own humanized form he fulfilled the functions of a human soul in the life of Christ, is a question on which kenoticists are not agreed. The admission of a distinct human soul must mean, for this doctrine, the co-existence of two souls in Christ—two not different in their human cast. In this case there could be no personal oneness of

<sup>1</sup> Dorner: *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, div. ii, vol. ii, pp. 53-115: 266-315; Schmid: *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, § 55; Gerhart: *Bibliotheca Sacra*, January, 1863; Krauth: *The Conservative Reformation and its Theology*, article x.

<sup>2</sup> Bruce: *The Humiliation of Christ*, lect. iv.

Christ. On the other hand, the denial of a distinct human soul must mean a denial of the divine incarnation. The reality of such an incarnation cannot lie in the assumption of a mere body of flesh and blood. Certainly such a limitation could not answer to the sense of the Scriptures respecting this profound truth.

This kenoticism has really no ground in Scripture, though it NO GROUND IN SCRIPTURE. assumes such ground. The proofs which it brings are not proofs, because it is only by an unwarranted interpretation of the texts adduced that they can give any support to the theory. We give a few instances. "And the Word was made flesh."<sup>1</sup> This cannot mean any transmutation of the divine Logos into a body of human flesh. Much less can it mean a transformation of the Logos into a man, for this is much farther away from a literal sense than the former. The meaning is simply that in the incarnation the Logos invested himself in a human nature, of which a body of flesh is the visible part. This interpretation places the text in complete accord with other texts of the incarnation. Here are other instances: "God was manifest in the flesh."<sup>2</sup> "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same."<sup>3</sup> These texts give the same doctrine of the incarnation, but without any suggestion of the transformation of the Son into a man. That the Logos was made flesh can mean nothing more than these texts.

The special reliance of the theory is on a passage from St. Paul: THE SPECIAL TEXT. "Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men."<sup>4</sup> We have cited the Revised Version, it being more literal than the Authorized. We gave the meaning of this text in the treatment of the incarnation, and therefore require the less in considering its application to the present question.

"Being in the form of God" must mean an existence of the INTERPRETATION. Son either in the nature of God or in the glory of God. If the former be the true sense, then, on the ground of his divine nature, an equality of glory with the Father was his rightful possession. If the latter be the true sense, then we have simply the fact that the Son rightfully existed in the full glory of God. It should be specially noted that this estate of glory was not his merely in right, but his in actual possession. This meaning is in the words, "counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself." This accords with another text: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with

<sup>1</sup> John i, 14.<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. iii, 16.<sup>3</sup> Heb. ii, 14.<sup>4</sup> Phil. ii, 6, 7.

the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”<sup>1</sup> Here the clear meaning is that the Son actually existed in the glory of the Father prior to his incarnation. Such is the sense of the great text now under special consideration.

What, then, is the truth of the kenosis in this case? The Son emptied himself—*ἐουτὸν ἐκενώσε*. But of what? THE KENOSIS. Surely not of his divine nature, nor of his divine perfections, which are inseparable from his nature. Nor can this act of kenosis mean the compression of his perfections into the cast and measure of mere human powers. Such an idea seems utterly foreign to any idea which the terms of the text either express or imply. This act of kenosis has respect to that estate of glory which, on the ground of his divine nature, the Son rightfully possessed in equality with the Father. It means a self-emptying or self-divestment of that glory. This accords with his own words as previously cited: “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” That glory he once possessed, but had surrendered. The surrender was by the act of kenosis which we have in the text under special consideration. This interpretation brings all the parts of the text into complete harmony. The form of a servant in the likeness of men, which the Son assumed in the incarnation, stands in clear antithesis, not with his divine nature and perfections, but with the estate of glory which he possessed with the Father; which glory he might have rightfully retained, but with which he freely parted, and took instead the form of a servant in the likeness of men. The text gives no support to the kenotic Christology.

The aim of kenoticism is twofold: to secure the unity of the person of Christ, and to provide for the human facts of his life. AIM OF KENOTICISM. The self-limitation of the Son in the incarnation to a mere human cast and measure is held to be necessary to the personal oneness of Christ, and to the reality of the human facts of his intramundane or historic life. The personal oneness is declared to be impossible on the ground of the traditional doctrine of the divine incarnation. It is readily conceded that this personal oneness is incomprehensible; but surely the THE MYSTERY REMAINS. mystery is not solved nor in the least relieved by the theory of a humanized Logos as co-existent with a human soul in Christ. A duality of persons seems absolutely inseparable from such a co-existence; and this attempt to secure and explain the personal oneness of Christ is utterly futile. Further: if, as we formerly pointed out, the deepest truth of the incarnation lies in

<sup>1</sup> John xvii, 5.

the divine consciousness of the human, may not this question of personal oneness have for us less pressing concern than we usually concede it? All that we require is such a relation of the divine to the human in Christ as will provide for this consciousness. And may there not be such a relation without the rigid unity of personality which is usually maintained? Let it be observed, however, that, in this hypothetical putting of the case, we do not yield the doctrine of the personal oneness of Christ. But on the ground of this kenoticism there could be no divine consciousness of the human in the incarnation, because the humanized Logos could no longer have any divine consciousness.

The implications of this doctrine of the kenosis in Christology are contrary to the deepest truths of Christian theology. If the Son of God could part with his divine attributes or humanize himself, then divinity itself must be mutable. This consequence can be denied only on a denial of the divinity of the Son. But his divinity is conceded in the very idea of his self-divestment of his divine attributes. The theory is subversive of the divine Trinity. The humanized Son, self-emptied of his divine attributes, could no longer be a divine subsistence in the Trinity. Hence this kenosis of the Son must mean the destruction of the Trinity. The theory is not less subversive of other fundamental truths of Christian theology. No ground of an atonement in the blood of Christ could remain. That the Son once existed in the divine Trinity, and in the plenitude of the divine life, could avail nothing for such an atonement. If self-reduced to the measure of a man, his death could be no more saving than the death of a man. No ground of the sympathy of Christ could remain, as that sympathy is revealed in the Scriptures, and as it must be in order to meet the exigencies of Christian experience. Such a sympathy we have found to be possible only through the divine consciousness of human experiences of suffering and trial. But there can be no such consciousness in the mere human consciousness to which this kenoticism limits the incarnate Logos. A theory with such implications can have no ground of truth in the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bruce : *The Humiliation of Christ* ; Pope : *The Person of Christ*, note viii ; Goodwin : *Christ and Humanity* ; Martensen : *Christian Dogmatics*, pp. 237-288 ; Crosby : *The True Humanity of Christ* ; Hodge : *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 430-440 ; Gess : *Scripture Doctrine of the Person of Christ*. Translation and additions by Reubelt. This work and Bruce's *Humiliation of Christ* are specially useful in the study of this question.

PART V.  

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SOTERIOLOGY.



# SOTERIOLOGY.

## THE ATONEMENT IN CHRIST.

### PRELIMINARIES.

THE great facts specially distinctive of Christianity lie in its soteriology. Hence this is the part of theology in which the truth of doctrine most deeply concerns us.

1. *Soteriology*.—The term soteriology is from *σωτηρία* and *λόγος*, and means the doctrine of salvation. The doctrine includes two great facts: an atonement for sin, and a salvation from sin. Underlying these facts there is the great truth of a Saviour, Jesus Christ, who makes the atonement, and through its provisions accomplishes the salvation. Hence any proper expression of these facts of Christian soteriology must recognize their vital connection with him. We shall attain this recognition in the use of the following formulas for their representation: the atonement in Christ, and the salvation in Christ.

TWO GREAT  
FACTS.

VITALLY RE-  
LATED TO  
CHRIST.

2. *Atonement as Fact and Doctrine*.—We should distinguish between the fact and the doctrine of atonement. Are the vicarious sufferings of Christ the ground of forgiveness and salvation? In what sense are they such a ground? These are distinct questions, and open to distinct answers. The first concerns the fact of an atonement; the second concerns its nature. Nor does an affirmative answer to the first question determine the answer to the second. Were this so, all who hold the fact of an atonement would agree in the doctrine. But such is not the case. Different schemes of theology, while in the fullest accord on the fact, are widely divergent respecting the doctrine.

Both questions are important, but that concerning the fact is the more vital. If the atonement be a reality, we may accept it in faith, and receive the benefit of its grace before we attain its philosophy. So accepted, it has the most salutary influence upon the religious life. To this both the experience of individual Christians and the history of the Church bear witness.

THE FACT THE  
MORE VITAL.

Yet the question of theory is far from being an indifferent or merely speculative one. The atonement is most fundamental in Christianity. Hence the theory of it must hold a commanding position in any system of Christian doctrine, and largely draw into itself the interest of the system. This is apparent upon a reference to the three great systems, which may be designated as the Arminian, the Calvinian, and the Socinian. As are other cardinal doctrines of each, so is its doctrine of atonement, or, conversely, as its doctrine of atonement, so are its other doctrines. In all profounder study the mind, by an inevitable tendency, searches for a philosophy of things. There is the same tendency in the deeper study of Christian truth. Thus, beyond the fact of an atonement, we search for a doctrine. We seek to understand its nature; what are its elements of atoning value; how it is the ground of divine forgiveness. We attempt its *rationalité*. It must have a philosophy; and one clear to the divine mind, whatever obscurity it may have to the human. Its clear apprehension would be helpful to faith in many minds.<sup>1</sup>

3. *Relation of the Doctrine to other Doctrines.*—That a doctrine of atonement must fairly interpret the facts and terms of Scripture in which it is expressed, we hold to be an imperative law. There is also a law of the highest authority in logical method. It is the law of a scientific accordance in intimately related doctrinal truths. It has its application to all scientific systems, and to the science of theology equally as to any other. In any and every system truth must accord with truth. In systematic theology doctrine must accord with doctrine. Under this law a doctrine of atonement must be in scientific accord with cardinal doctrines vitally related to it. This law, while imperative, neither leads us away from the authority of Scripture nor lands us in a sphere of mere speculation. All Christian doctrine, to be true, must be scriptural. Doctrines in a system, to be true, must be both accordant and scriptural. If discordant or contradictory, some one or more must be both unscriptural and false. Hence this law of a scientific accordance in vitally related truths is consistent with the profoundest deference to the authority of revelation in all questions of Christian doctrine.

This law may render valuable service in the construction and interpretation of Christian doctrine. As we may interpret Scripture by Scripture, so may we interpret doctrine by doctrine. Only, the interpreting doctrine must itself be certainly scriptural. As such, no Christian doctrine can be

<sup>1</sup> Randles : *Substitution : Atonement*, pp. 2, 3.



out of accord with it. In any distinction of standard or determining doctrines, preference should be given to the more fundamental ; especially to such as are most certainly scriptural. Accepting such a law in the interpretation of atonement, or in the determination of its nature, we are still rendering the fullest obedience to the authority of the Scriptures in Christian doctrine.

In the line of these facts and principles this law may be of special service in testing different theories of atonement, as they belong to different systems of theology. We shall the better understand the legitimacy and service of this application if we hold in clear view the two leading facts previously noted, that in any system of Christian theology the several doctrines, as constituting a system, must be in scientific agreement, and, as Christian, must be scriptural. Hence, as leading doctrines of the system are true or false, so is the doctrine of atonement which is in accord with them. For illustration we may refer to the three leading systems previously named.

APPLIED TO  
THE ATONE-  
MENT.

If other peculiar and leading doctrines of the Socinian theology be true and scriptural, so is its atonement of moral influence. If its Christology and anthropology be true and scriptural, this atonement is in full harmony with the system ; and, further, is the only one which it needs or will admit. Clearly, it cannot admit either the satisfaction or the governmental theory. Both are out of harmony with its more fundamental and determining doctrines, and hence are excluded by the law of a necessary accordance of such truths when brought into scientific relation. The Socinian scheme, by the nature of its anthropology and Christology, denies the need of such an atonement, and has no Christ equal to the making of one. But if on the leading doctrines of Christianity the truth is with the Calvinistic or the Arminian system, then the Socinian atonement is false. It is so out of harmony with such doctrines that it cannot be true while they are true.

IN SOCINIAN-  
ISM.

If other cardinal doctrines of Calvinism are true, its doctrine of atonement is true. It is an integral part of the system, and in full harmony with every other part. The doctrines of divine sovereignty and decrees, of unconditional election to salvation, of the effectual calling and final perseverance of the elect, and that their salvation is monergistically wrought as it is sovereignly decreed, require an atonement which in its very nature is and must be effectual in the salvation of all for whom it is made. Such an atonement the system has in the absolute substitution of Christ, both in precept and penalty, in behalf of the elect. He fulfills the righteousness which the law requires of them,

IN CALVINISM.

and suffers the punishment which their sins deserve. By the nature of the substitution both must go to their account. Such a theory of atonement is in scientific accord with the whole system. And the truth of the system would carry with it the truth of the theory. It can admit no other theory. Nor can such an atonement be true if the system be false.

If the cardinal doctrines of the Arminian system, such as differentiation from Calvinism, be true, then the atonement of satisfaction, in the Calvinistic sense of it, cannot be true. If the atonement is really for all, and in the same sense sufficient for all, then it must be only provisory, and its saving benefits really conditional. And no other truths are more deeply wrought into Arminianism, whether original or Wesleyan; none have a more uniform, constant, unqualified Methodistic utterance. They are such facts of atonement, or facts in such logical relation to it, that they require a doctrine in scientific agreement with themselves. Such a doctrine is the special aim of this discussion—not without regard to consistency in the system, but specially because these facts are scriptural, and the doctrine agreeing with them scriptural and true.

4. *Definition of the Atonement.*—A true doctrine of atonement can be fully given only in its formal exposition. Yet we give thus early a definition, with a few explanatory notes, that, so far as practicable by such means, we may place in view the doctrine which this discussion shall maintain.

*The vicarious sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin as a conditional substitute for penalty, fulfilling, on the forgiveness of sin, the obligation of justice and the office of penalty in moral government.*

The sufferings of Christ are *vicarious*, not as incidental to a philanthropic or reformatory mission, but as endured for sinners under divine judicial condemnation, that they might be forgiven and saved.

They are a *substitute* for penalty, not as the punishment of sin judicially inflicted upon Christ, but in such rectoral relation to justice and law as renders them a true and sufficient ground of forgiveness.

They are a *conditional* substitute for penalty, as a provisory measure of government, rendering forgiveness, on proper conditions, consistent with the obligations of justice in moral administration. Subjects of the atonement are none the less guilty simply on that account, as they would be under an atonement by penal substitution, wherein Christ suffered the judicial

punishment of sin in satisfaction of an absolute retributive justice. Under a provisory substitution, the gracious franchise is in a privilege of forgiveness, to be realized only on its proper conditions.

Thus the substitution of Christ in suffering *fulfills the obligation of justice and the office of penalty* in their relation to the *ends* of moral government. Justice has an impera-  
RECTORAL OF-  
FICE.  
 tive obligation respecting these ends; and penalty, as the means of justice, a necessary office for their attainment. But penalty, as an element of law, is the means of good government, not only in its imminence or execution, but also through the moral ideas which it expresses. Hence its infliction in punishment is not an absolute necessity to the ends of its office. The rectoral service of its execution may be substituted, and in every instance of forgiveness is substituted, by the sufferings of Christ. The interest of moral government is thereby equally conserved.

The *ends* of justice thus concerned involve the profoundest interests. They include the honor and authority of God  
ENDS CON-  
SERVED.  
 as ruler in the moral realm; the most sacred rights and the highest welfare of moral beings; the utmost attainable restraint of sin and promotion of righteousness. Divine justice must regard these ends. In their neglect it would cease to be justice. It must not omit their protection through the means of penalty, except on the ground of such provisory substitute as will render forgiveness consistent with that protection. Such a substitute is found only in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. As fully answering for these ends, his sufferings are an atonement for sin, fulfilling, on forgiveness, the obligation of justice and the office of penalty in moral government.

## CHAPTER I.

## REALITY OF ATONEMENT.

IN this chapter we treat the atonement simply as a fact, not as a doctrine. The sense in which the vicarious sacrifice of Christ constitutes the objective ground of divine forgiveness is for separate discussion.

## I. WITNESSING FACTS.

There are certain facts that all should receive as scriptural, however diversely they may be interpreted. We claim for them a decisive testimony to the reality of an atonement for sin in the mediation of Christ.

1. *A Message of Salvation.*—The Gospel is pre-eminently such a message to a sinful and lost world. Its very style as the Gospel—*τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*—sets it forth as good tidings. It is “the glorious Gospel of the blessed God;”<sup>1</sup> “the Gospel of the grace of God;”<sup>2</sup> “the Gospel of salvation.”<sup>3</sup> A free overture of grace in forgiveness and salvation crowns the Gospel of Christ.

2. *The Salvation in Christ.*—While the great fact of Revelation is the mission of Christ, the great purpose of this mission is the salvation of sinners. The Scriptures ever witness to this purpose, and specially reveal Christ as the Saviour. The angel of the annunciation gave charge respecting the coming Messiah: “And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.”<sup>4</sup> The announcement of the blessed advent to the shepherds was in a like strain: “And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”<sup>5</sup> Additional texts could only emphasize these explicit utterances of the salvation in Christ. “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”<sup>6</sup> “This is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.”<sup>7</sup> “And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.”<sup>8</sup> These texts, though but a small fraction

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. i, 11.<sup>2</sup> Acts xx, 24.<sup>3</sup> Eph. i, 13.<sup>4</sup> Matt. i, 21.<sup>5</sup> Luke ii, 10, 11.<sup>6</sup> John iii, 17.<sup>7</sup> John iv, 42.<sup>8</sup> 1 John iv, 14.

of a great number, are sufficient for the verification of the fact that the salvation so freely offered in the Gospel is a salvation in Christ.

3. *Salvation in His Suffering.*—This truth is declared by the very many texts which set forth the mission of Christ as the Saviour of sinners. They are so numerous that PROOF-TEXTS. their full citation would fill many pages. We may give a few in part: “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”<sup>1</sup> This whole chapter is full of the same truth, and clearly anticipates the higher revelation of the New Testament. “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins.”<sup>2</sup> “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”<sup>3</sup> “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”<sup>4</sup> “And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”<sup>5</sup> “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”<sup>6</sup> These words, so explicitly attributing our salvation to the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, might well be heard as from the very borderland between the earthly and heavenly states. Then like words, and equally explicit, come from beyond the border, attributing the salvation of the saints in heaven to the same atoning blood: “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.”<sup>7</sup> These texts sufficiently verify this third fact as a fact of Scripture, that the salvation so freely offered in the Gospel of Christ is a salvation provided in his suffering and death.

4. *His Redeeming Death Necessary.*—The vicarious sacrifice of Christ was not a primary or absolute necessity, but only NECESSARY TO SALVATION. as the sufficient ground of forgiveness. And not only is salvation directly ascribed to his blood, but his redeeming death is declared to be necessary to this salvation. “Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”<sup>8</sup> Thus it behooved Christ to suffer, not for the fulfillment of the prophetic

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liii, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. iii, 25.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. v, 9.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. iii, 18.

<sup>5</sup> 1 John i, 7.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. i, 5, 6.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. vii, 14, 15.

<sup>8</sup> Luke xxiv, 46, 47.

Scriptures, but in order to the salvation which, long before his advent, they had foretold as the provision of his vicarious sacrifice. Only on the ground of his suffering and death could there be either the preaching of repentance, or the grace of repentance, or the remission of sins. This was the imperative behoof. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."<sup>1</sup> The emphasis of this text is in the fact that these things are affirmed of the crucified Christ. "For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."<sup>2</sup> In the context St. Paul is asserting his own realization of a spiritual life through faith in Christ, who loved him, and gave himself for him. This life in salvation he declares to be impossible by the law, and possible only through the sacrificial death of Christ. Were it otherwise, Christ has died in vain. The necessity for his redeeming death in order to forgiveness and salvation could not be affirmed more explicitly, nor with deeper emphasis. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law."<sup>3</sup> Here is the same truth of necessity. Life is by the redeeming Christ, and has no other possible source.

5. *Only Explanation of His Suffering.*—The sufferings of Christ were for no sin of his own. Nor were they officially necessary, except as an atonement for sin. He had power to avert them, and endured them only through love to a lost world and in filial obedience to his Father's will.<sup>4</sup> They were not chosen for their own sake on the part of either, but only in the interests of human salvation. They were a profound sacrifice on the part of both. And while the Son went willingly down into their awful depths his very nature shrank from them. Three times the prayer of his soul was poured out to his loving Father, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."<sup>5</sup> There must have been some deep necessity for his drinking it. Clearly that necessity lay in this—that only thereby could salvation be brought into the world. And these sufferings of the redeeming Son witness to the reality of an atonement for sin.

6. *Necessity of Faith to Salvation.*—The facts already given and verified by the Scriptures are decisive of an atonement for sin in the sufferings and death of Christ. They go beyond its reality and conclude its necessity. It is also a significant fact, and one bearing on the same point, that faith in Christ, and as the redeeming Christ, is the true and necessary condition of forgiveness and salvation.

<sup>1</sup> Acts iv, 12.<sup>2</sup> Gal. ii, 21.<sup>3</sup> Gal. iii, 21.<sup>4</sup> John x, 18.<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxvi, 39, 42, 44.

Generally, faith in Christ, with the associated idea of his redeeming death, is set forth as the condition. Proof-texts are numerous and familiar. We may instance the great THE GREAT COMMISSION. commission: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."<sup>1</sup> As Christ laid this solemn charge upon his ministers to preach the Gospel in all the world, and which should be so especially the preaching of himself crucified, it was very proper and profoundly important that he should distinctly set forth the condition of the great salvation so proclaimed. This he did in the most explicit terms. Faith in Christ is the condition so clearly given. This is the imperative requirement. And the Lord emphasizes the fact by declaring the different consequences of believing and not believing. We may add another text in this general view: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."<sup>2</sup> As the Israelites, bitten by the fiery serpents and ready to perish, were recovered only on looking upon the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up in the midst of the camp,<sup>3</sup> so is our salvation conditioned on our faith in Christ lifted up upon the cross as a sacrifice for sin.

Yet more directly is this fact given: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to de- MORE SPECIFICALLY. declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."<sup>4</sup> Here the forgiveness of sin is through the propitiatory blood of Christ as its ground, and on faith therein as its condition. Such is the economy of redemption, whereby the divine righteousness is vindicated in the justification of sinners.

Faith could not be so required were not the blood of Christ a true and necessary atonement for sin. Were repentance a THE FAITH NECESSARY. sufficient ground of forgiveness, it would still be necessary to believe certain religious truths for the sake of their practical force. Only thus could there be a true repentance. But such is not the faith on which we are justified. There is a clear distinction of offices in the two cases. The faith necessary to repentance is operative through the practical force of the religious truths which it apprehends; but the justifying faith apprehends the blood of

<sup>1</sup> Mark xvi, 15, 16.<sup>2</sup> John iii, 14, 15.<sup>3</sup> Num. xxi, 7-9.<sup>4</sup> Rom. iii, 25, 26.

Christ as a propitiation for sin, trusts directly therein, and receives forgiveness as the immediate gift of grace. No other view will interpret the Scriptures, which most explicitly give us the truth of justification by faith in Christ.<sup>1</sup> The justification is in the forgiveness of sin, and must be, as it is the justification of sinners. And the direct and necessary connection of justification with faith in the redemption of Christ, together with the immediateness of the forgiveness itself, concludes this distinct office of justifying faith. Hence, to confound such a faith with another faith in Christ as salutary simply through the practical force of spiritual truths and motives so apprehended, is to jumble egregiously.

There is such a practical faith in Christ, and of the highest moral potency. It may precede or follow the justifying faith. It apprehends the great practical lessons embodied in the Gospel. Their apprehension in faith is the necessary condition of their practical force. The soul thus opens to their moral motives, and realizes their practical influence. This is the philosophy of a chief element of the practical power of faith. It gives the law of moral potency in all practical appeals in view of the love of God and the sacrifice of Christ in the redemptive mediation. Such is the only office of faith in the scheme of moral influence. We fully accept the fact of a great practical lesson in the mediation of Christ; and our own doctrine combines the weightiest elements of its potency. But we object to the accounting this moral lesson, however valuable, an element of the atonement proper—most of all, the very atonement itself. This is the error of the theory of moral influence. But our special objection to this view here is that it denies a distinct office of faith in the propitiatory work of Christ as the condition of justification. It consistently and necessarily does this. But there is such an office of faith, and one clearly distinguished from its office as a practical force in the religious life. And the distinct requirement of faith in the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, in order to forgiveness, is conclusive of a true and necessary atonement for sin in his suffering and death.

7. *Priesthood and Sacrifice.*—The priesthood of Christ had its prophetic utterance: “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”<sup>2</sup> But the fullest unfolding of his priesthood with its sacrificial and intercessory offices is in the Epistle to the Hebrews: “Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 19–22; iv, 5; Gal. ii, 16; iii, 22–24.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. cx, 4.



to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." "Seeing then that we have a great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high-priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."<sup>1</sup> These texts will suffice for what is really placed beyond question.

As it was an office of the priesthood, under the law, to offer sacrifices in atonement for sin, so Christ as our high-priest must offer a sacrifice for sin. This is not a mere in-ference, but the word of Scripture: "For every high-priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer."<sup>2</sup>

Nor are we left in any doubt respecting his sacrifice. He offers up himself. The fact is so often stated, and in such terms, as to give it the profoundest significance.

"Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor."<sup>3</sup> "Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."<sup>4</sup> "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God:" "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."<sup>5</sup> No critical exegesis is required to find in these texts the fact of an atonement in the mediation of Christ.

In the statements respecting the sacrifice of Christ there are clear references to the ancient sacrifices; and its interpretation in the light of these references gives us the same fact of an atonement. But we shall not discuss that system; a brief reference will answer for our purpose.

The great annual atonement has special prominence. Its many rites, divinely prescribed with exactness of detail, were sacredly observed. Its leading facts were few and simple, but of profound significance. The high-priest sacrificed a bullock in atonement for himself and family, and, entering with its blood into the holy of holies, sprinkled it upon the

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ii, 17; iv, 14; viii, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. viii, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. v, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. vii, 27.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. ix, 14, 25, 26; see also chap. x, 5-12.

mercy-seat. Thus he found access into the divine presence. Then he selected two goats for an atonement for the people. One he sacrificed, and, entering with its blood into the most holy place, sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat before the Lord. Then, with his hands upon the head of the other, he confessed over it the sins of the people, and sent it away into the wilderness, thus signifying the bearing away of their sins.<sup>1</sup> Thus the high-priest made an atonement for sin.<sup>2</sup>

The whole idea of atonement may here be denied on an assumption that the means have no adequacy to the end; that CLEAR IDEA OF ATONEMENT. it is not in the nature of such a ceremony or such a sacrifice to constitute a ground of forgiveness. It is conceded that there is therein no intrinsic atonement. This, indeed, is the Scripture view.<sup>3</sup> But the idea of atonement is not therefore wanting. The divine reconciliation is real, the forgiveness of sin actual, but on the ground of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ—"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."<sup>4</sup> His atonement was not yet formally made, but already existed as a provision of the redemptive economy, and as efficacious for salvation. And the idea of atonement is as real in the typical sacrifice as in that which is intrinsically sufficient. Otherwise, the Levitical atonement has no typical office, and hence is utterly inexplicable. We have thus the idea of atonement in the Levitical sacrifices, and the fact of a real atonement in the sacrifice of Christ. The former were an atonement for sin only typically, not efficaciously; while the latter, represented by them, and the ground of their acceptance, is intrinsically the atonement. As divinely appointed in their sacrificial office, and typical therein of the sacrifice of Christ, they give decisive testimony to the fact of an atonement in his death.<sup>5</sup>

The intercession of Christ in a priestly office fulfilled in heaven INTERCESSION IN HEAVEN. is a fact clearly given in the Scriptures: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."<sup>6</sup> "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xvi, 5-22.

<sup>2</sup> John Pye Smith: *Sacrifice and Priesthood*, pp. 246, 247.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. x, 1-11.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. xiii, 8.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. ix, 8-12; x, 1.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. viii, 34.

<sup>7</sup> Heb. ix, 12, 24.

Now mere intercession does not prove atonement; but such intercession does. It is in the order of the priestly office of Christ. This is clear from the texts cited, especially with their connections. It follows the atoning sacrifice of himself, and with clear reference to the service of the Levitical atonement. As the high-priest entered with the blood of the sacrifice into the most holy place, and sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat, the very place of the divine presence and propitiation; so Christ entered with his own blood—not literally with it, but with its atoning virtue and the tokens of his sacrifice—into heaven itself, into the very presence of God, in the office of intercession. Such an intercession, the very pleas of which are in his vicarious sacrifice and blood, affirms the reality of atonement.

8. *Christ a Unique Saviour.*—Christ is a person in history; but his history is unique, and his character and work unique. Often designated the Son of man, he yet cannot be classed with men. In the fashion of a man, he is yet above men. The facts of his life constitute a new history, distinct and different from all others. They reveal a personal consciousness alone in its kind. A manifest fact of this consciousness is the profound sense of a divine vocation, original and singular in the moral history of the world, and which he only can fulfill. The moral impression of his life upon the souls of men is peculiar to itself, and fitly responsive to the originality of his own character and work. Amid men and angels, he stands apart in his own personality and mission.

His religion is unique. It is such because he, as a religious founder, is original and singular. Here, also, he cannot be classed with others in any exact sense. Every religion is, more or less, what its founder is. His thoughts and feelings are wrought into it. It takes its molding from the cast of his mind. Its aims and forces are the outgoing of his own subjective life. Most eminently has Christ wrought his soul and life into his own religion. In the highest sense its aims and forces are the outgoing of his own mind: so much so that to come into the same mind with him is the highest realization of the Christian life. What he is, his religion is. But his distinctive peculiarity, as the founder of a religion, is not so much in the higher measure of his life wrought into it as in the quality of that life. Hence his religion differs so much from all others, because he differs so much from all other religious founders.

His religion is unique as one of salvation. And it is not only the fact of a salvation, but especially the distinctive character of

it, that constitutes the peculiarity. It is a salvation in forgiveness of sin and in moral regeneration. So it is realized in the gracious experience of many souls. And this salvation comes not as the fruit of culture, nor in reward of personal merit, nor as the purchase of penance or treasure. A religion grounded in such profound truths respecting God and man, and especially respecting man's moral state and spiritual destiny and needs, never could offer such a salvation on such conditions. The means have no sufficiency for the end. This salvation is provided for and possible only in the grace and spiritual agencies of a redemptive economy. Here sin is taken away and the soul renewed. There is a new life in Christ. In this life is salvation—such a salvation as no other religion provides.

Most of all is Christ a unique Saviour in that he saves us by the sacrifice of himself. The salvation is not in his divinity, nor in his humanity, nor in his unique personality as the God-man, nor in the lessons of religion which he taught, nor in the perfect life which he lived and gave to the world as an example, nor in the love wherewith he loved us, nor in all the moral force of life, and lesson, and love combined, but in his cross—in the blood of his cross as an atonement for sin. The voice of revelation is one voice, ever distinct, unvarying, and emphatic, in the utterance of this truth. This utterance comes forth of all the facts and words which reveal the distinctively saving work of Christ. They need no citation here. A few have already been given. Others will appear in their proper place. For the present, the position need only be stated and emphasized: Christ is a Saviour through an atonement in his blood. He is such a Saviour singularly, uniquely. The fact is too clear and certain for denial. No one familiar with the Scriptures, and frank in his spiritual mood, can question it.

This is a cardinal fact, and one not to be overlooked in the interpretation of the redeeming work of Christ. No other has ever claimed to put his own life and blood into the saving efficiency of his religion. No other is, nor can be, such a Saviour as Christ. If a Saviour only through a moral influence, good men are saviours as truly as he, and in the same mode, differing only in the measure of their influence. Can such a theory interpret the Scriptures, or find a response in the highest, best form of the Christian consciousness? Who is there in all the Christian ages whom we can regard as a saviour in the same sense as Christ, and differing only in the measure of his saving influence? As revealed in the Scriptures, and apprehended in the liv-

ing faith of the Church, and realized in the truest Christian experience, Christ is the only Saviour. And he is a Saviour only through an atonement in his blood. This is his highest distinction as a Saviour, and one that places him apart from all others. Any theory of Christianity contrary to this view is false to the Scriptures, false to the soteriology of the Gospel, false to the living religious faith and consciousness of the Christian centuries. And unless we can surrender all essentially distinctive character in the saving work of Christ, and so do violence to all decisive facts in the case, we must maintain a true atonement in his death as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness and salvation.

## II. WITNESSING TERMS.

Advocates of an objective atonement in Christ, while differing on the doctrine, are quite agreed on the Scripture proofs of the fact. Their interpretations are much the same, except where they go beyond the reality of an atonement and press their respective doctrinal views into the exposition. It is in the order of a better method to keep, as far as practicable, to one question at a time. This we shall endeavor to do in treating the leading terms for the fact of atonement. A full treatment of these terms for the purpose in hand would require a volume. The discussion has often been elaborately gone over, and very conclusively for the fact of an atonement. There is, therefore, the less occasion to repeat it. Any one interested in the question will readily find its full and able treatment in the standard works on systematic theology, and in treatises exclusively on the atonement.

1. *Atonement*.—This term is of frequent use in the Old Testament, but occurs only once in the New. The original, קָפַר, signifies to cover: then to cover sin, to forgive sin, to discharge from punishment: in its noun form, an expiation, a propitiation, a redemption.<sup>1</sup>

In its primary meaning the term has no proper sense of atonement.<sup>2</sup> It acquires such a sense in its use. Its meaning, as in the case of many other terms, is thus broadened. A rigid adherence in such a case to the primary sense is false to the deeper ideas conveyed. Atonement, as expressed by this term, was often for the removal of ceremonial impurities, or in order to a proper qualification for sacred services. It has this sense in application to both

<sup>1</sup> Gesenius : *Hebrew and English Lexicon* ; Magee : *Atonement and Sacrifice*, dissertation xxxvi ; John Pye Smith : *Sacrifice and Priesthood*, pp. 136, 301-304 ; Cave : *The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice*, pp. 482-486.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. vi, 14.

things and persons.<sup>1</sup> We have not yet, however, the full sense, but a foreshadowing of its deeper meaning.

In the more strictly moral and legal relations of the term we may admit a lower and a higher sense, and without any concession to those who, on the ground of the former, would exclude the latter. In many instances atonement was made for what are designated as sins of ignorance.<sup>2</sup> It may not be rightfully assumed that these sins were without amenability in justice and law. The contrary is apparent. "The ignorance intended cannot have been of a nature absolute and invincible, but such as the clear promulgation of their law, and their strict obligation to study it day and night, rendered them accountable for, and which was consequently in a certain degree culpable."<sup>3</sup> But were such instances without culpability, and therefore without evidence of an atonement, the fact could not affect the instances of atonement for sins of the deepest responsibility. There are such instances.<sup>4</sup> And to put the lower sense upon examples of the higher—most of all, to deny the higher because there is a lower—is without law in Scripture exegesis.

In the higher moral and legal relations of atonement there are the facts of sin and judicial condemnation. The offender is answerable in penalty. Then there is a vicarious sacrifice, and the forgiveness of the sinner. There is an atonement for sin. The fact is clear in the Scripture texts given by reference. Others equally conclusive will be given elsewhere.

There are instances of atonement without any sacrifice. Moses by an intercessory prayer made an atonement for Israel after the sin of idolatry in worshiping the golden calf.<sup>5</sup> Aaron with his censer atoned for the congregation after the rebellion of Korah.<sup>6</sup> Phinehas by his religious zeal made an atonement for the people, and turned away from them the divine wrath.<sup>7</sup> In view of such facts it is urged that there is no direct and necessary connection between sacrifices of atonement and the divine forgiveness, and hence, that there is no proof in the sacrificial system of an atonement for sin in the sacrifice of Christ. This is inconsequent. The sacrifices of the law were an atonement only typically, not intrinsically.<sup>8</sup> While, therefore, certain kinds might have special fitness for this service, yet mere typical fitness has nothing essential. Hence these sacrifices of atonement might be varied or

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xvi, 11, 16, 18, 33.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. iv, 13-26; v, 17-19; Num. xv, 24-28.

<sup>3</sup> Magee: *Atonement and Sacrifice*, dissertation xxxvii.

<sup>4</sup> Lev. vi, 2-7.

<sup>5</sup> Exod. xxxii, 30-32.

<sup>6</sup> Num. xvi, 46-48.

<sup>7</sup> Num. xxv, 11-13.

<sup>8</sup> Heb. x, 1-11.

even omitted, while the atonement in the sacrifice of Christ, as intrinsically such, is both real and necessary.

We get the proof of an atonement in Christ not so much from the direct application of the original term to him as from ATONEMENT IN CHRIST. certain significant types fulfilled in him, and especially from the application of equivalent terms in the Greek of the New Testament to his redemptive mediation. We may give one instance in which the original term is applied to the atoning sacrifice of Christ.<sup>1</sup> The passage referred to is clearly Messianic. It determines by historic connections the time of Christ's advent. Then it gives certain ends to be accomplished: "to make an end of sins"—to terminate the typical sacrifices of the law by the one sufficient sacrifice of himself; "and to make reconciliation—רִכְכָּר—for iniquity." The passage clearly shows that Christ makes an atonement for sin by the sacrifice of himself. And this sense is emphasized in the further fact that "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself," especially as viewed in the light of intimately related facts and utterances of the Gospel.

2. *Reconciliation.*—Reconciliation, and to reconcile—*καταλλαγῆ, καταλλάσσειν*—are terms frequently applied to the redemptive work of Christ, and with the clear sense of a real atonement.

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."<sup>2</sup> This is the reconciliation of OF ENEMIES. enemies, and, therefore, of persons under God's displeasure and judicial condemnation. The reconciliation is by the death of his Son. The assurance of salvation lies in the fact of such a reconciliation of enemies. Acceptance in the divine favor comes after this reconciliation as its provisional ground. The death of Christ renders forgiveness consistent with the requirements of justice in moral administration. Such a reconciliation is the reality of atonement. With such a fact, St. Paul might well add: "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received—*τῆν καταλλαγῆν*—the reconciliation."<sup>3</sup> Here is the joy of an actual reconciliation through the death of Christ.

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of BY JESUS CHRIST. reconciliation," etc.<sup>4</sup> The facts of this text give the sense of a real atonement. The reconciliation is in Christ. It includes a non-imputation of sin; that is, we are no longer held in absolute condemnation, but have the gracious privilege of the divine

<sup>1</sup> Dan. ix, 24-26.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. v, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. v, 11.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v, 18-21.

forgiveness and friendship. Hence there is committed to us the ministry of reconciliation, with its gracious overtures and entreaties. And the manner in which God reconciles us to himself in Christ is deeply emphasized: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Any fair exposition of this text must find in it the fact of an atonement.<sup>1</sup>

It is urged in objection, that in these texts we are said to be reconciled to God, not God to us. The fact is admitted, while the validity of the objection is denied. It falsely assumes that the only bar to God's friendship with his rebellious subjects is in their hostility to him; and hence illogically concludes that the reconciliation in Christ is an atonement, not as a rectoral ground of the divine forgiveness, but simply as a moral influence leading them to repentance and loyalty. This is contradicted by many principles and facts previously discussed. It is contrary to those texts according to which God, by the reconciliation in Christ, puts himself into a relation of mercy toward us, and then, on the ground of this reconciliation, urges and entreats us in penitence and faith to accept his offered forgiveness and love. Thus upon the ground of a provisory divine reconciliation there will follow an actual reconciliation and a mutual friendship.

Further, this objection falsely assumes that reconciliation is simply the cessation of hostility in the party said to be reconciled. It properly means, and often can mean only, that he is reconciled in the sense of gaining the forgiveness and friendship of the party to whom he is reconciled. Of this there are familiar instances in Scripture.<sup>2</sup> As applied to rebellious subjects the term has its first relation to the ruler. "To be *reconciled*, when spoken of subjects who have been in rebellion against their sovereign, is to be brought into a state in which pardon is offered to them, and they have it in their power to render themselves capable of that pardon, namely, of laying down their enmity. . . . Wherefore, *the reconciliation* received through Christ is God's placing all mankind, ever since the fall, under the gracious new covenant, procured for them through the obedience of Christ; in which the pardon of sin is offered to them, together with eternal life, on their fulfilling its gracious requisitions."<sup>3</sup> This is an accurate statement of the reconciliation in Christ, and gives us the fact of an atonement therein.

<sup>1</sup> See also Eph. ii, 16; Col. i, 20-22; Heb. ii, 17.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. xxix, 4; Matt. v, 23, 24.

<sup>3</sup> Macknight: *On the Epistles*, Rom. v, 10.



3. *Propitiation*.—To be propitious is to be disposed to forgiveness and favor. To propitiate is to render an aggrieved or offended party clement and forgiving. A propitiation is that whereby the favorable change is wrought. There are two points to be specially noticed: the nature of the divine propitiousness toward sinners; and the relation of the redemptive mediation of Christ to that propitiousness.

God is propitious to sinners in a disposition toward forgiveness. This is in the definition of the term. The same sense DIVINE PROPITIOUSNESS. is given in Scripture, without any direct reference to a propitiatory sacrifice. The fact will render the clearer the propitiatory office of the blood of Christ. We will cite a few texts in illustration; but for a clearer view of the sense stated, the original terms—appropriate forms of כִּפָּר, סָלַח, ἰλάσκειν—should be consulted, as the term propitious, or to be propitious, is not given in our translation. “For thy name’s sake, O Lord, *pardon* mine iniquity: for it is great.”<sup>1</sup> “But he, being full of compassion, *forgave* their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.”<sup>2</sup> “O Lord, hear; O Lord, *forgive*.”<sup>3</sup> “God *be merciful* to me a sinner.”<sup>4</sup> “For I will *be merciful* to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”<sup>5</sup> These texts, selected from many similar ones, suffice for the position that God is propitious in a disposition toward forgiveness, and in the fact of forgiveness as the exercise of such clemency. Here are sins, and the divine displeasure against them. Here are sinners with a deep sense of sin and of the divine condemnation. Here are their earnest prayers to God, that he would be propitious and forgive. And he forgives them, turns away his wrath and accepts them in favor, as he is propitious to them.

These facts determine the meaning of a propitiation. It is that which renders an aggrieved or offended party clement and forgiving; that which is the reason or ground of forgiveness. Such a propitiation is an atonement.

Christ is a propitiation for sin. He is such in his sacrificial death, and in relation to the divine clemency and for- CHRIST A PROPITIATION. giveness. “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past.”<sup>6</sup> Here are all the facts of a true propitiation: the presupposed sins as an offense against God, and his displeasure against them; the blood of Christ as a propitiation

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxv, 11.<sup>2</sup> Psa. lxxviii, 38.<sup>3</sup> Dan. ix, 19.<sup>4</sup> Luke xviii, 13.<sup>5</sup> Heb. viii, 12.<sup>6</sup> Rom. iii, 25.

for sins; the divine clemency and forgiveness through this propitiation. The blood of Christ fulfills its propitiatory office with God. There is, therefore, an atonement in his blood. Other Scripture texts give the same truth. "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."<sup>1</sup> Such a propitiation for sin is the reality of an atonement in Christ.

4. *Redemption*.—Under this term might be classed many texts which, with the utmost certainty, give us the fact of an atonement.

Redemption has a clear and well-defined sense. To redeem is to purchase back, to ransom, to liberate from slavery, captivity, or death, by the payment of a price. This gives the sense of redemption or to redeem—*λυτρόω*—in both its classic and Scripture use.<sup>2</sup>

Under the Mosaic law alienated lands might be recovered by the payment of a ransom or price. This would be a redemption. Such alienated property, if not previously ransomed, reverted without price at the jubilee; but this reversion was not a redemption, because without any ransom.<sup>3</sup> A poor Israelite might redeem himself from slavery by the payment of a sum reckoned according to the time remaining for which he had sold himself. This would be his redemption. But the freedom which came with the jubilee was not a redemption, because it came without any price.<sup>4</sup> These facts confirm the sense of redemption as previously given. Further, in the case of one who has forfeited his life: "If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him."<sup>5</sup> This is an instance of redemption. The same meaning lies in the fact that for the life of a murderer no ransom was permitted.<sup>6</sup>

Occasional uses of the term simply in the sense of a deliverance are not contrary to the truer and deeper meaning. There is a deliverance as the result of a redemption. The ransom is paid in order to the deliverance. And it is a proper usage to apply the name of a thing to its effect, or to what constitutes only a part of its meaning. This use is entirely consistent with the deeper sense of redemption, while the deeper sense cannot be reduced to that of a mere deliverance. This is true of the instances previously given, and will be found true of the redemption in Christ.

<sup>1</sup> 1 John ii, 2; iv, 10.

<sup>2</sup> John Pye Smith: *Sacrifice and Priesthood*, pp. 204-207; Hill: *Lectures in Divinity*, pp. 474, 475.

<sup>3</sup> Lev. xxv, 23-28.

<sup>4</sup> Lev. xxv, 47-54.

<sup>5</sup> Exod. xxi, 30.

<sup>6</sup> Num. xxxv, 31.

We shall here select but a few of the many texts which apply the terms of redemption to the saving work of Christ. REDEMPTION  
BY CHRIST.  
 "The Son of man came . . . to give his life a ransom for many." "Who gave himself a ransom for all."<sup>1</sup> The original terms—*λύτρον, ἀντίλυτρον*—are the very terms which signify the ransom or price given for the liberation of a captive, the recovery of anything forfeited, or the satisfaction of penal obligation. So, for our deliverance from sin and death, and for the recovery of our forfeited spiritual life, Christ gives his life—himself—as the ransom. Redemption in its deeper sense could not have a clearer expression. Truly are we "bought with a price;" "not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."<sup>2</sup> As in other cases silver and gold constitute the ransom, so the blood of Christ is the price of our redemption from sin.

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity."—"And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."<sup>3</sup> Here are facts of redemption which give us a real atonement. We are sinners, with the penal liabilities of sin; and Christ gives his own life as the price of our ransom.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."<sup>4</sup> In the second text we have a different original word—*ἐξαγοράζω*—but of like meaning. The subjects of the redemption are under the law, and under the curse of the law—the former state implying all that the latter expresses. Whether "the law" be the law of nature or the Mosaic, the facts of redemption are the same. Under both men are sinners, and by neither is there salvation. The redemption is from the penalty of sin—from the curse of the law. The same sense is determined by the fact that the redemption is to the end "that we might receive the adoption of sons." The death of Christ upon the cross is the redemption.

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." "In whom we have redemption through his

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xx, 28; 1 Tim. ii, 6.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. vi, 20; 1 Pet. i, 18, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Titus ii, 14; Heb. ix, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. iii, 13; iv, 4, 5.

blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”<sup>1</sup> Here we have the same facts of redemption. We are sinners and under divine condemnation. The redemption through Christ, and in his blood, is in order to our justification, or the forgiveness of our sins.

Such are the facts of redemption by Jesus Christ. And with the sin and condemnation of men as its subjects, with the forgiveness and salvation which it provides, with the blood of Christ as the ransom whereby the gracious change is wrought, it is unreasonable to deny the fact of an atonement in his redeeming death. “Every one feels the effect of introducing the nouns *λύτρον* or *ἀντίλυτρον*, in connection with the verb *λύω*, when applied to the case of a discharged debtor or released captive, as making it perfectly clear that his redemption is not gratuitous, but that some consideration is given for the securing it. Nor is the significancy of these nouns in the least diminished when it is from penal consequences of a judicial nature that a person is released. The *λύτρον*, indeed, in that case, is not a price from which the law-giver is to receive any personal advantage. It is the satisfaction to public law and justice upon which he consents to remit the sentence. But still, the mention of it, in this case as well as in others, is absolutely inconsistent with a gratuitous remission.”<sup>2</sup> This statement holds true, with all the force of its facts, in application, as intended, to the redemption in Christ. The deeper ideas of redemption were wrought into the minds of the writers of the New Testament by both their Hebraic and Hellenic education. Nor may we think that they used its terms out of their proper meaning in applying them to the saving work of Christ. Such a redemption is the reality of atonement.

Redemption holds a prominent place in the nomenclature of atonement; indeed, is often used for the designative term instead of atonement itself. It may be pressed into the service of an erroneous doctrine. The result is a commercial atonement. But this is carrying the analogy in the case to an unwarranted extreme. Redemption is modified by the sphere in which it is made. The ransom-price of a captive or slave goes to the personal benefit of the party making the surrender; it is his compensation. The transaction is one of barter. When a penalty of death was commuted for a sum of money the ransom

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 24; Eph. i, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Hill: *Lectures in Divinity*, vol. ii, p. 433. The passage varies from the same one in the American edition, and is given as quoted by Professor Crawford.

was penal and of rectoral service, but also of pecuniary value with the government. In the divine government there can be no such element of redemption. The redemption does not thereby lose the sense of an atonement, but should, therefore, be guarded against an erroneous doctrine. The gist of the analogy is in the fact of a compensatory ransom. This is consistent with a wide distinction in the nature of the compensation. There is a wide distinction in fact: in the one case a personal, pecuniary compensation; in the other, a compensation in rectoral value. In the one case money redeems a captive or slave as a commercial equivalent; in the other, the blood of Christ redeems a soul as the rectoral equivalent of penalty. The ransom is as vitally related to the result in the latter case as in the former. This gives us the reality of an atonement in the redemption of Christ, and will give us a doctrine without any commercial element.

5. *Substitution.*—Substitution is not formally a Scripture term, but well expresses the sense of numerous texts in their application to the saving work of Christ. Like the term “redemption,” it may be pressed into the service of an erroneous doctrine. This, however, can be done only by a wrong interpretation of the substitution. But we are still only on the fact of an atonement, and, for the proof of this, here require nothing more than the substitution of Christ in suffering as the ground of forgiveness.

The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is clearly Messianic, and clearly gives us the fact of substitutional atonement. We shall attempt no elaborate or critical exposition. This WORDS OF ISAAIAH. has often been done, and successfully for the sense of a real atonement.<sup>1</sup> We cite the leading utterances: “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter. . . . For the transgression of my people was he stricken. . . . Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. . . . And he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”<sup>2</sup> These words are decisive of a substitutional atonement in the sufferings of Christ.

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man OTHER PROOF TEXTS. will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward

<sup>1</sup> Alexander, Lowth, Delitzsch, severally on Isaiah; Terry: *Methodist Quarterly Review*, January, 1880.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. liii, 5–12.

us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”<sup>1</sup> Surely here is atonement in substitution. Those for whom Christ died are noted as ungodly, sinners, enemies. Hence they are in a state of condemnation. In the death of Christ for them is the ground of their justification, which is impossible by the deeds of the law. These facts give us atonement by substitution. This sense is confirmed by the supposed case of one dying for another. It is the supposition of a substitution of one life for another, the rescue of one by the vicarious sacrifice of another. So Christ died for us as sinners, and in order to our forgiveness and salvation. It is a substitution in law; not penal, but rectoral, so that law might still fulfill its office in the interest of moral government. This is vicarious atonement.

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”<sup>2</sup> Here is a clear reference to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and also the same sense of atonement by substitution.

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.”<sup>3</sup> Our sins separate us from God, and bring us under his condemnation. There can be reconciliation and fellowship only through forgiveness. Christ provides for this by suffering for our sins in our stead—the just for the unjust. This is the reality of atonement by substitution in suffering.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v, 6-8.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. ii, 24.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. iii, 18.

## CHAPTER II.

## NECESSITY FOR ATONEMENT.

THE necessity for an atonement is so closely related to the question of its nature that the former might be fully discussed in connection with the latter. Yet its separate treatment, at least so far as our own doctrine is concerned, is in the order of the better method.

In our witnessing facts for the reality of an atonement we gave Scripture proofs of its necessity. This necessity, as PROOFS OF NE-divinely revealed, is asserted in the most explicit and CESSITY. emphatic terms. It is given with all the force of a logical implication in the requirement of faith in the redeeming Christ as the necessary condition of forgiveness and salvation. It is further verified as the only explanation of the sufferings and death of Christ. The facts of his redemptive mediation are of no ordinary character. Indeed, they are so extraordinary as to require the profoundest necessity for their vindication under a specially providential economy. The incarnation of the Son of God is a marvelous event. Its deeper meaning we read only in the light of his own character and rank. In the form of God, he has a rightful glory in equality with him. This he surrenders, and takes, instead, the form of a servant, in the likeness of men. His estate is in the deepest abasement. He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He bears the reproaches and hatreds of men. His sufferings have unfathomed depths. After the profound self-humiliation in the incarnation he yet further humbles himself and becomes obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.<sup>1</sup>

The will of the Father is concurrent with the will of the Son in this whole transaction. While the Son comes in the gladness of filial obedience and the compassion of redeeming love, the Father sends him forth and prepares for him a body for his priestly sacrifice.<sup>2</sup> The infinite sacrifice of this concurring love of the Father and the Son affirms the deepest necessity for an atonement as the ground of forgiveness.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxix, 9; Rom. xv, 3; Phil. ii, 6-8; 1 Tim. iii, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. xl, 6-8; Heb. x, 5-9.

## J. GROUND OF NECESSITY IN MORAL GOVERNMENT.

Only with the fact of a divine moral government can there be the occasion of any question respecting the necessity for an atonement. If we are not under law to God we are without sin. If without sin, we have nothing to be forgiven. Hence there could be for us no necessary ground of forgiveness.

1. *Fact of a Moral Government.*—God being God, and the Creator of men, and men being what they are, a moral government is the profoundest moral necessity. We have a moral nature, with the powers of an ethical life. Our character is determined according to the use of these powers. Herein is involved our profoundest personal interest. We also deeply affect each other, and after the manner of our own life. Here is a law of great evil. Nor would the fact be other, except infinitely worse, were we wholly without law from heaven. The less men know of a divine law, with its weightier obligations and sanctions, the lower they sink into moral corruption and ruin. The moral powers and the forces of evil are full of spontaneous impulse. Nor do they await the occasion of a revealed law for their corrupting and ruinous activity. And however the absence of all divine law might change our relation to judicial penalty, our moral ruin would be, nevertheless, inevitable and utter. Now, should we even concede God's indifference to his own claims upon our obedience and love, it would be irrational, and blasphemous even, to assume his indifference to all the interests of virtue and well-being in us. He cannot overlook us. His own perfections constrain his infinite regard for our welfare. Under the condition of such facts there is, and there must be, a divine moral government over us. The moral consciousness of humanity affirms the fact of such a government.<sup>1</sup>

2. *Requisites of a Moral Government.*—Within the moral realm subjects may differ: possibly, in some facts of their personal constitution; certainly, in their moral state and tendencies. A wise government must vary its provisions in adjustment to the requirement of such differences. In some facts the divine law must be the same for all. It must require the obedience of all; for such is the right of the divine Ruler and the common obligation of his subjects. It must guard the rights and interests of all. Beyond such facts, yet for the reason of them, the provisions of law, as means to the great ends of moral government, should vary as subjects differ. The same principles which imperatively require a moral

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Butler: *Analogy of Religion*, part i, chaps. ii, iii; Gillett: *The Moral System*.



government for moral beings also require its economy in adjustment to any considerable peculiarities of moral condition and tendency.

This law has special significance, and should not be overlooked in the present inquiry. We are seeking for the necessity SPECIALLY FOR MAN. of an atonement in the requirements of moral govern-  
ment: and we shall more readily find it in view of our own moral tendencies and needs. The atonement, while directly for man, has infinitely wider relations than the present sphere of humanity. Indirectly it concerns all intelligences, and is, no doubt, in adjustment to all moral interests. Still, in its immediate purpose it is a provision for the forgiveness and salvation of men. The atonement is, therefore, a measure introduced into the divine government as immediately over us, and its special necessity must arise from the interests so directly concerned.

Subjects should know the will of the Sovereign. There are things to be done, and things not to be done. Nor can A LAW OF DUTY. such things always be known either by reason or experience. This may be true even with the highest in perfection, and with every thought and feeling responsive to duty. Most certainly is it true of us. The mode in which the law of duty shall be given is not first in importance. It is the law itself that is so essential. How God may reveal his will to angels we know not, because we know neither his modes of expression nor their powers of apprehension. In some mode it is made known, and so becomes the law of their duty. And God has made known his will to us. This is chiefly done through revelation, though we have some light through the moral reason and the direct agency of the Holy Spirit. God gave a law to Adam, communicated his will to the patriarchs, wrote the decalogue on tables of stone for Israel and for man, spake often to the people by the prophets. And Christ summed up the law of Christian duty in the two great commandments. It is not requisite that every particular duty should be given in a special statute. This would be for us an impracticable code. We have the law of duty, in a far better form, in the great moral principles given in the gospels. And thus we have the divine will revealed to us as the law of our duty.

In the highest conceivable perfection, with the clearest apprehension of duty, with every sentiment responsive to its behests, and with no tendency nor temptation to the SANCTION OF REWARDS. contrary, obedience would be assured without the sanction of rewards. In such a state, however munificent the divine favors might be to such obedience, penalty could have no necessary governmental function. But when obedience is difficult and its failure a special liability, duty must have the sanction of rewards. They

must form a part of the law and have as distinct an announcement as its precepts. Otherwise, government is void of a necessary adjustment to the moral state of its subjects.

Such is the requirement of our moral condition. With us there are many hinderances to duty, and the liability to sin is great. There is moral darkness, spiritual apathy, a strong tendency to evil, and the incoming of much temptation. We deeply need the moral sanctions of law in the promise of good and the imminence of penalty. And however defective the virtue wrought merely under the influence of such motives, they are clearly necessary to the ordinary morality of life. Whether in view of human or divine law, or of the history of the race, every candid man must confess the necessity of such support to the social and public morality, and that without it there could be no true civil life. It was in the conviction of such a truth that the ancient sages asserted the necessity of religion to the life of the State and the well-being of society, and that the ancient lawgivers and rulers maintained religious institutions and services for the sake of the support which the expectation of rewards in a future state gave to law and duty in the present life.<sup>1</sup> And for us as a race there is the profoundest need of penalty as a fact of law. With the vicious, as the many would be without the law, the imminence of penalty is a far weightier sanction of law than the promise of reward.

3. *Divine Determination of Rewards.*—It is the prerogative of the divine Ruler to determine the rewards of human conduct. No other can determine them either rightfully or wisely. Specially are we void of both the prerogative and the capacity for their proper apportionment. Even in the plane of secular duties and interests, and with the gathered experience of ages, questions of penalty are still the perplexing problems of the most highly civilized States; and surely we should not assume a capacity for the adjustment of law and its rewards to the requirements of the divine government. But God comprehends the whole question, and has full prerogative in its decisions. He knows what measure of rewards is befitting his justice and goodness and required by the interests of his moral government. And, accordingly, he has given us the law of our duty, with its announced rewards of obedience and sin.

4. *Measure of Penalty.*—God determines the measure of penalty, but not arbitrarily. His infinite sovereignty asserts no disregard of the principles of justice nor of the rights and interests of his subjects. He is a wise and good Sovereign, as he is a just and holy one.

DETERMINING  
LAWS.

<sup>1</sup> Warburton: *The Divine Legation of Moses*, books ii, iii.

Sin has intrinsic demerit. It deserves to be punished; and God has the exact measure of its desert. So far penalty may be carried. THE DEMERIT OF SIN. Divine justice, in its distinctive retributive function, has no reason for pause short of this. In its own free course it would so punish all sin. But justice cannot carry its penalties beyond the demerit of sin. Nor can it suffer any interests of moral government to carry them beyond this limit. Nay, *punishment* cannot go beyond. Whatever transcends the intrinsic demerit of sin ceases in all that transcendence to be punishment. Hence, while the inherent turpitude of sin is the real and only ground of punishment, its own measure is a limitation of penalty.

It is an important office of penalty to conserve the interests of the government. We here use the term government THE OFFICE OF PENALTY. not in any ideal or abstract sense, but as including the divine Sovereign ruling in its administration, and the moral beings over whom he rules. The rights and glory of God are concerned; the profoundest interests of men are concerned. So far we may speak with certainty, however it may be with other orders of moral beings. Hence the rectoral function of penalty is a most important one. Its importance rises in the measure of the interests which it must conserve.

It must fulfill its rectoral office specially as a restraint upon sin. It must, therefore, be wisely adjusted in its measure to this specific end. Two facts condition its restraining force: one, the strength of our tendency to sin; the other, the state of our motivity to penalty as an impending infliction. CONDITIONING FACTS. Both of these facts deeply concern the measure of penalty required by the highest interests of moral government. With a strong tendency to sin, and a feeble motivity to the imminence of penalty—facts so broadly and deeply written in human history—penalties must be the severer. The interests of moral government may require them even in the full measure of the demerit of sin. Up to this limit, whatever God may see to be requisite to these interests will not fail of his appointment as the penalty of sin. All the fundamental principles which determine his institution of the wisest and best government must so determine him respecting the measure of penalty.

## II. NECESSITY FOR PENALTY.

The physical evil and moral wretchedness which follow upon our sinful conduct, but really as consequent to our constitution and relations, are not strictly of the nature of punishment, though such is a very common view. SOME EVILS NOT PENAL. That sin brings misery is in the order of the divine constitution of things. It is

not clear that there could be such a constitution of moral beings that suffering would not follow upon sin. Indeed, the contrary is manifest. But what so follows as a natural result, though in an order of things divinely constituted, is not strictly penal. Such naturally consequent evil may have in the divine plan an important ministry in the economy of moral government. But punishment, strictly, is a divine infliction of penalty upon sin in the order of a judicial administration. The necessity for penalty, therefore, is not from necessary causation, but from sufficient moral grounds. Penalty has such a necessity in the interest of moral government, except as its office may be fulfilled by some substitutional measure. In the moral realm there is a divine moral Ruler ; and the vital truth of the present question must be viewed in the light of his perfections and rectoral relations. In such light the moral necessity for penalty is manifest.

1. *From its Rectoral Office.*—Omitting other things for the present, penalty has a necessary office in the good of moral government. Justice itself is directly concerned therein. Nor is any requirement of justice more imperative. Sin must be restrained and moral order maintained for the honor of God and the good of moral beings. The innocent must be protected against injury and wrong. Justice cannot overlook these profound interests. In such neglect it would cease to be justice. It must sacredly guard them. A necessary power for their protection lies in its penalty. This it may not omit, except through some measure equally fulfilling the same rectoral office, while forgiveness is granted to repenting sinners.

2. *From the Divine Holiness.*—God, as a perfectly holy being, must give support to righteousness and place barriers in the way of sin. He must seek, in the use of all proper means, the prevention or utmost restraint of sin. But in the moral state of humanity penalty is a necessary means for such limitation. Lift the restraint of its imminence from the soul and conscience of men, and, wicked as they now are, they would be immensely worse. Even a presumptive hope of impunity emboldens sin. The divine forbearance in the deferment of merited punishment is made the occasion of a deeper impenitence and a more persistent impiety. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”<sup>1</sup> And a release from all amenability to penalty would be to many a divine license to the freest vicious indulgence. The divine holiness, therefore, must require the restraint of sin through the ministry of

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. viii, 11.

penalty, except as the interest of righteousness may be protected through some other means.

3. *From the Divine Goodness.*—Nor less must the divine goodness support this office of justice. Sin brings misery. It must bring misery, even in the absence of all infliction of penalty. The race would be far more wretched in the absence of all penalty than it is under an amenability to its rectoral inflictions. While, therefore, God punishes with reluctance, and with profound sympathy for the suffering sinner, yet, as a God of love, he must maintain the office of penalty in the interest of human happiness. The only ground of its surrender, even on the part of the divine goodness, must be found in some vicarious measure equally answering the same end.

4. *A Real Necessity for Atonement.*—The result is, the necessity for an atonement. Without such a provision sinners cannot be forgiven and saved. The impossibility is concluded by the facts and principles which this chapter unfolds. The necessity for the redemptive mediation of Christ lies ultimately in the perfections of God as moral ruler. It is, therefore, most imperative.

5. *Nature of the Atonement Indicated.*—We have not yet reached the place for the more formal discussion of the true theory of atonement; yet certain facts and principles have already come into view which so clearly indicate its nature that their doctrinal meaning may properly be noted here.

We have the truth of a divine moral government as the ground-fact in the necessity for an atonement. We have found BY ITS NECESSITY. the facts and principles of such a government strongly affirmative of this necessity. They thus respond to the explicit affirmations of Scripture thereon. Further, we have found this necessity to be grounded in the profoundest interests of moral government, for the protection of which the penalties of the divine justice have a necessary function. Here we have the real hindrance to a mere administrative forgiveness, and, therefore, the real necessity for an atonement. The true office of atonement follows accordingly. The vicarious sufferings of Christ answer for the obligation of justice and the office of penalty in the interests of moral government, so that such interest shall not suffer through the forgiveness of sin. This is, however, not the whole service of the redemptive mediation of Christ, but a chief fact in its more specific office, and one answering to the deepest necessity for an atonement.

The nature of the atonement is thus determined. The vicarious sufferings of Christ are a provisory substitute for pen- ITS REAL NATURE. alty, and not the actual punishment of sin. He is not such a substitute in penalty as to preserve the same retributive

administration of justice as in the actual punishment of sinners. The sufferings of Christ, endured for us as sinners, so fulfill the obligation of justice and the office of penalty in the interest of moral government as to render forgiveness, on proper conditions, entirely consistent therewith. Such is the nature of the atonement.

Such a view fully answers to the relation between God and men as sovereign and subjects, and to the facts of their IN ACCORD WITH FACTS. sinfulness and subjection to his righteous displeasure and judicial condemnation. Sin offends his justice and love, incurs his righteous displeasure, and constitutes in them punitive desert. Such are the facts which the Scriptures so fully recognize. And God as a righteous ruler must inflict merited penalty upon sin, not, indeed, in the gratification of any mere personal resentment, nor in the satisfaction of an absolute retributive justice, but in the interest of moral government, or find some rectorally compensatory measure for the remission of penalty. Such a measure there is in the redemptive mediation of Christ. The conclusion gives us an atonement, not by an absolute substitution in punishment, but by a provisory substitution in suffering.

## CHAPTER III.

## SCHEMES WITHOUT ATONEMENT.

SOME hold the fact of salvation who yet deny a vicarious atonement. Such consistently deny its necessity. There is, in their view, no element of divine justice, nor interest of moral government, which makes it necessary. Sin may be forgiven or ultimate salvation attained without it. These great blessings have other grounds or modes. In accord with this position, and as consistency requires, certain grounds or modes are alleged as entirely sufficient for our forgiveness or future happiness. Thus we have schemes of salvation without an atonement in Christ, and in the denial of its necessity. It may be proper to notice some of them.

## I. BLESSEDNESS AFTER THE PENALTY.

Universalism and Calvinism differ widely in their completed systems—if we may speak of the former as a system. They are infinitely apart respecting the demerit of sin and the measure of its merited penalty. Yet the two are at one in the cardinal principle that sin must be punished according to its desert. We speak of these systems in their more regular form, not in all their phases. But such a principle in Universalism, as in any non-atonement scheme, gives no place for salvation.

1. *Salvation Excluded.*—In any deep sense of the term, salvation is possible only as a real forgiveness of sin, or its substitutional punishment, is possible. Where the penalty is fully suffered by the offender, as Universalism asserts it must be, there is no salvation. When a criminal has suffered the full penalty awarded him his discharge is no matter of grace, and his further punishment would be an injustice. There is neither forgiveness nor salvation in his release. On the scheme of Universalism the same must be true in every instance of divine penalty. Such a scheme is false to the clearly revealed fact of forgiveness; false to the soteriology of the Scriptures. The fact is deeply wrought into the Gospel of Christ that he is a Saviour through the forgiveness of sin; a Saviour from the punishment of sin; and such a Saviour through an atonement in his blood. These facts have been set forth and verified by the Scriptures, and need not here be repeated.

2. *Final Blessedness really a Salvation.*—The denial of ultimate happiness as a salvation is a logical implication of this scheme. The same is true whether merited punishment is limited to this life or continues for a greater or less time in the next. There is no salvation in the termination of such a punishment, whether in the present or future world. Justice has no further penal claim. And while the happiness then beginning and flowing on forever might be far above any merit in us, still it could not be a salvation. Certainly it could be no such a salvation as the Scriptures reveal in Christ. In the truest and deepest sense future happiness is a salvation through his atonement.<sup>1</sup> Hence the scheme which precludes this fact cannot be true.

3. *Impossible under Endless Penalty.*—A scheme of ultimate and endless happiness, after a full personal satisfaction of justice in penalty, must limit the duration of punishment, however long it may continue in a future state. If penalty be eternal there can be no after-state of happiness. Here arises a great question, the discussion of which would lead us quite aside from the subject in hand. We simply note in passing that the Scriptures express the duration of penalty in terms most significant of its eternity. What seems specially decisive is, that it is so expressed when placed in immediate contrast with the endless reward of the righteous: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”<sup>2</sup> The same original word—*αἰώνιον*—expresses the duration in the two cases; and there is no more apparent reason for its limitation in the former than in the latter. In such a destiny on account of sin there can be no state of happiness after the penalty. Nor can the necessity for an atonement be so set aside.

## II. SALVATION THROUGH SOVEREIGN FORGIVENESS.

The necessity for an atonement is denied on the assumption that God, in mere sovereignty or on a merely personal disposition of kindness, and without regard to the ends of justice in the interest of moral government, may and does freely forgive sin. There are many objections to this view, and such as entirely discredit it.

1. *An Assumption against Facts.*—That God forgives and saves sinners on his mere sovereignty or pleasure, and without regard to the requirements of moral government, is without proof, and the sheerest assumption. Moreover, the facts of a providential history, already filling many centuries, are full in its contradiction. Were

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 14-16; vi, 47-51; x, 27, 28; Rom. v, 20, 21; vi, 23; 2 Tim. ii, 10; Heb. v, 9; ix, 15; 1 Pet. v, 10; Rev. v, 9, 10; vii, 14-17.      <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxv, 46.



the mere pleasure of God, as a kindly personal disposition, his only law, as this position assumes, there would be no instance of punishment. But there are many such. No one can rationally deny it. Now these facts are contradictory to such a mode of forgiveness. As the generations press to their altars with the sense of sin and with sacrifices of atonement the voice of humanity, in the deepest utterances of its religious consciousness, pronounces against it. Revelation, in words the most explicit and emphatic, confirms the judgment of humanity.

2. *Contrary to Divine Government.*—There is a moral government. There is such a government as divinely instituted. It is without any provision for a mere administrative forgiveness. Nor can it admit any such forgiveness, because it would be contrary to its own principles and measures. God, in full view of our moral state, and with infinite regard for our good, has instituted his government in adjustment to our duty and welfare. Penalty itself arises out of the requirement and interest of moral government. Hence its suspension without regard to any new provision would be contrary to government as divinely instituted, and also to the divine perfections in so ordering its provisions. Further, it would set the divine administration in direct opposition to the divine word. In clearest terms God has announced the penalties of sin. Now it is presumed that he will sovereignly interfere, and, without regard to any new provision, grant a universal forgiveness. Surely it is a bold assumption that God will so contradict himself and set his administration against his own law.

3. *Subversive of all Government.*—If forgiveness is so granted it must be universal. There could be no other law of salvation. And, otherwise, it would neither answer for our need nor for the divine impartiality. But with such universal forgiveness government really no longer exists. Justice makes no practical distinction between obedience and sin.

A law of duty without a penalty for transgression is a mere advisory rule of life, and, for us, void of necessary enforcing sanction. It would virtually say to every man, Do as you please; when it is certain that most men would please to do wrong and moral ruin be the result. How long could civil government be thus maintained? A partial uncertainty of penalty, a presumptive hope of impunity, emboldens crime. The license of a universal forgiveness would open the flood-gates of evil and hasten both social and political ruin. As a race we are even more propense to the disregard of moral duty and to sin against God. It may be claimed, and freely granted, that the grace of divine forgiveness

LAW WITHOUT  
PENALTY.

is a most weighty reason for grateful piety. But the common moral apathy would be insensible to its persuasive force. Facts clearly show that with most men the divine goodness pleads in vain. Even the cross, with the admission of its atoning love, so pleads in vain. Delays of punishment, with salvation for their end, are perverted to a more persistent evil doing. For such a race the free remission of all penalty would be subversive of all government, and whelm in ruin the profound moral interests which the divine government must conserve. Such inevitable consequences utterly discredit the assumption of forgiveness and salvation on mere sovereignty.

### III. FORGIVENESS ON REPENTANCE.

It is specially urged that repentance is a proper and entirely sufficient ground of forgiveness, and, hence, that there is no necessity for an atonement. This is a common position with rationalistic schemes.

1. *Repentance Necessary.*—The necessity for a true repentance, in order to forgiveness and salvation, is not only conceded, but firmly maintained in any proper doctrine of atonement. No provision of a redemptive economy could supersede this necessity. Impenitence after sinning is self-justification and the very spirit of rebellion; while penitence is the only self-condemnation and the only return to obedience. There must, therefore, be a genuine repentance. There can be neither forgiveness nor any real redemption from sin without it.

2. *The Only Kind Naturally Possible.*—The logic of this question will not concede the gratuitous assumption of a true repentance as possible in the resources of our own nature. A soul with the disabilities of depravity, and under the power of sin, cannot so repent. This accords with the facts of our moral condition as clearly given in the Scriptures, and also with a common experience and observation. There is a certain kind of repentance within our own power. We instinctively shrink from punishment, and, therefore, necessarily regret the sins which expose us to its infliction. But such regret implies no true sense of sin, and constitutes no necessary repentance. It is merely what the Scriptures designate as the sorrow of the world working death, and so discriminate it from a true godly sorrow for sin, working repentance unto salvation.<sup>1</sup> The former repentance, and the only kind naturally possible, is no proper ground of forgiveness. Nor has it any true redemptive power in the moral life.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vii, 9, 10.

3. *Such Repentance Inevitable.*—As the immediate product of our mental constitution such a repentance is inevitable, and hence must be universal. As we necessarily shrink from penalty, so we necessarily regret the evil deeds which subject us to its infliction. But what so arises naturally, and without any element of true contrition, can be no sufficient ground of forgiveness. Besides, as a necessary product, and therefore universal, it would involve a universal forgiveness. The result would be the subversion of all government, just as on a universal sovereign forgiveness. With such a policy no civil government could be maintained. Nor could a divine moral government be so maintained.

Nor is there validity in any rejoinder that, as the Gospel freely offers forgiveness on a repentance possible to all, it might hence be universal. This is true, but only in an economy of grace which provides for a true repentance and gives to the ministry of forgiveness the moral support of the redemptive mediation of Christ.

4. *Without any Deep Sense of Sin.*—In the repentance naturally possible sin is neither felt nor confessed in a true sense of its intrinsic evil, but only selfishly, on account of its result in personal suffering. It therefore can have no real redemptive or reformatory power in the moral life. And even were forgiveness permissible on the ground of so defective a repentance, a true salvation is not so possible. Forgiveness so easily granted never could bring the turpitude of sin home to the moral consciousness. To this extent would be the loss of moral benefit. The intenser the sense of sin, and the profounder the grateful love for the mercy of forgiveness, the more thorough is the moral recovery and salvation. It is easy to decide where there are such experiences. They are realized only through the helping and forgiving grace of redemption. As souls gather around the cross they have the deepest contrition for sin and the most grateful love for the gracious forgiveness.<sup>1</sup> Innumerable facts of religious experience so witness. And even if we could set aside the deeper necessity for an atonement, there is yet a profound moral necessity for the redemptive mediation of Christ in order to the moral recovery and salvation of the soul.

5. *True Repentance only by Grace.*—The moral disabilities consequent upon depravity and sin render a true repentance impossible in the resources of our own nature. NEED OF HELP. Such a state is one of spiritual blindness, insensibility, impotence, death. So the Scriptures represent it.<sup>2</sup> Hence, they attribute a

<sup>1</sup> Ullman : *The Sinlessness of Jesus*, p. 251.

<sup>2</sup> John vi, 44 ; Rom. v, 6 ; viii, 3, 4 ; Eph. ii, 1, 2 ; iv, 18 ; Col. ii, 13.

genuine repentance, both in its privilege and possibility, to the grace of the atonement and the agency of the Holy Spirit so procured. Thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise again, that repentance and remission of sins might be preached in his name. And a special office of the Holy Spirit, in a mission provided through the redemptive mediation of Christ, is to bring the sense of sin home to the conscience in a conviction necessary to a true repentance. So Christ, having redeemed us with his blood, is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins.<sup>1</sup>

The gracious ability and disposition to a true repentance are through the *evangelical* mission of the Spirit. Only THE HELP IN CHRIST. thus have we an explanation of the mighty work wrought on that memorable day of Pentecost. The Spirit was shed forth, not only upon the apostles in the power of preaching, but also upon the people in the power of religious conviction. And no one who denies this mission of the Spirit as a procurement of the redemptive mediation of Christ can account for the converting power of the Gospel on that day of Pentecost or for the work of religious revival in the history of Christianity. Hence it is an utterly futile attempt to supersede the necessity for an atonement by the sufficiency of repentance, while the repentance itself is possible only through the grace of the atonement.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV. SOME SPECIAL FACTS.

There are a few facts specially urged against the necessity for an atonement which should have a brief notice. They are such as may be presented in a plausible light, but are without logical force as urged in the argument.

1. *Forgiving One Another.*—We are required to forgive one another, and without any regard to an atonement. Now it is claimed that if God requires us so to forgive he will himself thus forgive.<sup>3</sup> Respecting our own duty no issue is made. Such a requirement is clearly in the Scriptures.<sup>4</sup> But there is nothing either in the nature or the manner of it which furnishes any ground for the inference that the divine forgiveness is without regard to an atonement. Indeed, one of the texts given in the reference, and which

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv, 46, 47 ; John xvi, 7-11 ; Acts v, 31.

<sup>2</sup> On the insufficiency of repentance as a ground of forgiveness : Butler : *Analogy of Religion*, part ii, chap. v, 4, 5 ; Magee : *Atonement and Sacrifice*, dissertations iv, v ; Watson : *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, pp. 96-102 ; Gilbert : *The Christian Atonement*, pp. 217, 466 ; Randles : *Substitution : Atonement*, pp. 179-186.

<sup>3</sup> Worcester : *The Atoning Sacrifice*, pp. 127-129.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xviii, 21, 22 ; Eph. iv, 32 ; Col. iii, 13.

Worcester cites for his position, is entirely to the contrary: "Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Account is also made of texts in which there is a coupling of our forgiving with the divine forgiving. If we forgive, we shall be forgiven: if we forgive not, we shall not be forgiven.<sup>1</sup> But the matter is still our duty of forgiving one another, accompanied, indeed, with its conditional relation to the divine forgiveness, but with no intimation that this is without regard to the atonement in Christ.

There is another view of this case, and one decisive against the inference adverse to the necessity for an atonement. This duty of forgiveness is the duty of private persons simply, and without any rectoral prerogative or obligation. One must so forgive, as the offense concerns one's self only. Even the Christian ruler must so forgive. But who ever thinks of his carrying this duty into his administration? When the offense is a crime in the law it has public relations, and he has rectoral obligations in the case. What he may and should do in a merely private relation he must not do as a minister of the law. God is moral ruler. Hence our forgiving one another has no such analogy to the divine forgiveness as to be the ground of an inference adverse to the necessity for an atonement.

2. *Parental Forgiveness.*—There is properly such a forgiveness, yet there must be a limit even here, the disregard of which brings serious evil. Besides, the family circle is small, and rather private than public in its economy. It is constituted in peculiarly intimate and affectionate relations. It is, therefore, eminently a sphere for governing through the moral influences hence arising or so rendered possible. But what may be fitting here is wholly inadmissible in a government of broad domain, and conditioned by very different influences and tendencies. The economy of the family will not answer for the government of the State, much less for the divine government of the world or the universe. God is ruler in a universal moral realm, and no propriety of mere parental forgiveness can prove that he may consistently forgive without an atonement.

3. *Parable of the Prodigal Son.*—The attempt to press this beautiful parable into the service of anti-atonement schemes is in the natural movement of rationalistic thought. "It is remarkable how perfectly this parable precludes every idea of the necessity of vicarious suffering, in order to the pardon of the penitent sinner. Had it been the special purpose of

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi, 12, 14, 15; Luke vi, 37.

our Lord to provide an antidote for such a doctrine it is difficult to conceive what could have been devised better adapted to that end."¹ Even Mr. Chubb, certainly without much sympathy with Christianity, has a treatise on this parable, in which he insists that by special design it teaches the sufficiency of repentance as the ground of forgiveness; that the free and gracious forgiveness of this father exemplifies the free and gracious forgiveness of the heavenly Father; and that such is at once the dictate of reason and the Gospel of Christ.

But it is certainly a queer kind of exegesis which claims a passage of Scripture that is entirely silent upon the atonement as decisive against both its reality and necessity. There is the greater violation of the laws of interpretation, because so many passages do specially treat the atonement, and in a manner decisive of its reality and necessity. Besides, all the freeness of the divine forgiveness which this parable represents, and which we gratefully accept, is in the fullest consistency with the doctrine of a vicarious atonement.

There is in this hasty and illogical method a neglect of vital and determining facts, and the assumption of a completeness of analogy which does not exist. The father in this parable appears and acts simply as such. Had he been a ruler also, and his son a criminal in the law, then, however gracious his fatherly affection, his rectoral obligations would have required recognition and observance. The vicious logic of this hasty method is thus manifest. It wrongly assumes that God's sole relation to moral beings is that of Father. This error utterly vitiates the conclusion. As we have previously noted, God is a moral Ruler as well as a gracious Father. Here is the vital, yet utterly neglected, distinction between the earthly and the heavenly Father. And what God might do simply as a Father, he may not do as moral Ruler.

Nor do these facts rob this parable of its lesson of grace. It is still true that the doctrine of atonement is in the fullest consistency with such a lesson. As this father graciously forgave his repenting son, so does God graciously forgive his repenting children. The one fact illustrates the other. But the Scriptures decide, and reason accords therewith, that it is through the atonement in Christ that God so forgives. He had no need for an atonement in his fatherly disposition, but only in the requirements of his rectoral offices. Now that an atonement has been made, he may and does forgive his repenting children in all the

¹ Worcester: *The Atoning Sacrifice*, p. 215.

fullness of his paternal grace and love. Thus we hold the full meaning of this lesson. We admire its grace. There is one of an infinitely deeper pathos. We read it in the sacrifice of the cross, as the atoning provision of the Father's love, that he might reach us in a gracious forgiveness.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THEORIES OF ATONEMENT.

## I. PRELIMINARIES.

1. *Earlier Views of Atonement.*—In the earlier history of the Church the redemption in Christ was viewed rather as a fact than as a doctrine. It was then, as it must ever be, the central truth of the Gospel. Christ was every-where proclaimed as a Saviour through his sacrificial death. Forgiveness and salvation were freely offered in his blood. But the great truth had its proclamation in the terms of Scripture rather than in the formulas of doctrine. This was proper, as it was natural. It is proper now, and will ever be so. Redemption, in all the preciousness of its truth and grace, has a living association with its own Scripture terms; and a disregard of this connection could not be other than a serious detriment. There were early utterances which well accord with strictly doctrinal views; still there was no formal construction of a doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

Then came the singular notion of redemption by a ransom to Satan. It is not agreed when, nor with whom, it originated. Some find in Irenæus, of the second century, its first representative, while others would entirely clear him of such a view. It certainly had a representative in the very gifted but speculative Origen, of the third century. Nor did it run its course without finding entertainment in the great and versatile mind of Augustine. It flourished in the patristic period, and held its position until the beginning of the scholastic, or the time of Anselm, late in the eleventh century.<sup>2</sup>

This very strange opinion was, probably, first suggested by certain texts of Scripture which represent us as in captivity or bondage to Satan, and our redemption by Christ as a deliverance from his possession and power. These representations may have suggested the idea of a right to us in Satan—such a right

<sup>1</sup> Oxenham: *Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement*, pp. 112–114; Knapp: *Christian Theology*, p. 400; Smeaton: *The Apostles' Doctrine of the Atonement*, pp. 480–493; Dale: *The Atonement*, pp. 269–278.

<sup>2</sup> Hagenbach: *History of Doctrines*, vol. i, pp. 192, 193; Shedd: *History of Christian Doctrine*, vol. ii, pp. 212–226; Oxenham: *The Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement*, pp. 114–124.



as that in which slaves or captives in war were held. He had conquered us, and brought us into his possession. In the prevalent ideas of the time this was a valid and rightful possession. Hence, probably, came the idea of the death of Christ as a ransom to Satan for the canceling of this claim. But this notion could not be permanent, and the marvel is that it continued so long. It is so incongruous with all cardinal facts so related to the atonement as to be decisive of its nature, that its dismissal was a necessary result of their intelligent apprehension.

2. *Inception of a Scientific Treatment.*—The treatment of the atonement in a scientific or more exact doctrinal manner really began with Anselm, late in the eleventh century. His book,<sup>1</sup> though but a small one, is not improperly characterized as an “epoch-making book.” It fell far short of controlling the doctrine of the Church on the atonement, yet it exerted a strong influence upon after discussions and opinions, whether accordant or in dissent. It furnished, though not in the full scientific sense usually claimed, a basis for the doctrine of satisfaction as constructed in the Reformed soteriology. Reviews of Anselm are so common to histories of doctrine, systems of theology, and monographic discussions of atonement, that there is little need of special reference.<sup>2</sup> We question neither the intellectual strength nor the intense religious earnestness of Anselm. And both are deeply wrought into his “*Cur Deus Homo.*” That the usual estimate of his work greatly exaggerates the scientific result we as little question. Such exaggeration is specially with his more sympathetic reviewers.

Anselm emphasizes certain principles or facts as fundamental, and makes them the ground of his doctrine of atonement. Sin is the withholding from God his rightful claim, and is to him, on account of his character, an infinite wrong. The sinner is thus brought into an infinite indebtedness to the divine honor. This debt must be paid. God must not and cannot surrender his own personal right and honor, as he would do in a mere gratuitous forgiveness. The sinner never can, by any personal conduct, satisfy this claim. Therefore he must suffer the full punishment of his sins, or, as the only alternative, satisfaction must be rendered by another. It follows that the only salvation is

<sup>1</sup> *Cur Deus Homo.* Translated in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vols. xi, xii.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl: *History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation*, pp. 22-35; Hagenbach: *History of Doctrines*, vol. ii, pp. 32-38; Smeaton: *The Apostles' Doctrine of the Atonement*, pp. 510-520; Oxenham: *The Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement*, pp. 166-174.

through the compensatory service of a divine Mediator. In this exigency the Son of God, in compassion for perishing sinners, was incarnated in their nature, and in their behalf gave himself up in holy obedience and suffering to the Father. On account of his *theanthropic* character his obedience and death are a full compensation to the violated honor of God, and, therefore, a true and sufficient ground of forgiveness.<sup>1</sup>

But neither essential element of the satisfaction atonement, especially as scientifically wrought into this doctrine, is distinctly given by Anselm. By common consent the substitutive office of the active obedience of Christ is not in his doctrine. This view was first opened by Thomas Aquinas, but long waited for its completion.<sup>2</sup> Nor did Anselm maintain the distinct view of penal substitution. He is so credited, but only as interpreted after the ideas so fully wrought into the Reformed soteriology. Certain avowed principles respecting the nature of sin and the necessity for divine satisfaction, in case of forgiveness, might imply a penal substitution, and do so imply in the doctrine of satisfaction—a fact which gives occasion and currency to such interpretation of Anselm. But he never gave them such a meaning, nor found in penal substitution their necessary implication. He does assert that punishment or satisfaction must follow every sin: “*Necesse est ut omne peccatum satisfactio aut pœna sequatur.*”<sup>3</sup> Here, however, punishment and satisfaction are discriminated and taken as alternately necessary, while in the doctrine of satisfaction the punishment of sin has no alternative. It is the only possible satisfaction of justice, and the two terms are really one in meaning, the ministry of justice varying only by an exchange of penal subjects, not in the execution of penalty. Anselm propounded no such doctrine of satisfaction by penal substitution. Nor are we without the support of good authority in so writing.<sup>4</sup>

Anselm represents the mediation of Christ in holy obedience and suffering as infinitely meritorious, and, therefore, as justly entitled to an infinitely great reward. But as an absolutely perfect being, and in possession of all blessedness, he was not himself properly rewardable: therefore the merited reward might, and on his prefer-

<sup>1</sup> Neander : *History of the Church*, vol. iv, pp. 498, 499 ; Knapp : *Christian Theology*, p. 402.

<sup>2</sup> Shedd : *History of Christian Doctrine*, vol. ii, pp. 309, 310.

<sup>3</sup> *Opera Omnia* (Migne's), Tomus Primus, 381.

<sup>4</sup> Neander : *History of the Church*, vol. iv, p. 500 ; Bruce : *The Humiliation of Christ*, p. 353 ; Oxenham : *The Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 172.

ence should, go to sinners in forgiveness and salvation.<sup>1</sup> But the doctrine, in its principles and structure, is very different from the doctrine of satisfaction, and in some of its facts really very like the middle theory.

3. *Popular Number of Theories.*—Historically, or in popular enumeration, theories of atonement are many. Nor is this strange. The subject is one of the profoundest. The facts REASONS FOR MANY. which it concerns are of stupendous character. Its relations to the great questions of theology are vitally intimate. In scientific treatment it should be accordant to the system of doctrines into which it is wrought. Further, some minds are given to speculation and to fanciful views, or, for a lack of proper analysis and construction, take some one fact—perhaps a merely incidental one—for the whole truth, while others would timidly avoid the deeper principles of the question. In such facts we have reason enough for many theories. Yet authors widely differ NUMBERS GIVEN. respecting the number. Dr. Hodge enumerates five, but omits material modifications, while yet bringing them fully into his discussion.<sup>2</sup> Professor Crawford names thirteen theories as substitutes for what he chooses to call the Catholic doctrine—the Calvinistic doctrine. Then he adds the later theory of Dr. Bushnell, thus giving us in all fifteen.<sup>3</sup> Alford Cave names as many.<sup>4</sup> Such large enumeration, however, is superficial, and made with little regard to analysis and scientific classification.

4. *Scientific Enumeration.*—The truth to be interpreted in the doctrine of atonement is the work of Christ in our salvation. But he can save us only by some work or influence within us, or with God for us, or by both. Such work or influence, whatever it is, must answer to the need in the case. Some need there must be, else a redemptive mediation has neither place nor office. Many who deny an absolute need will yet admit a relative one, and so urgent as to give propriety and value to a redemptive economy.

Two facts vitally concern the question of need, respecting which there should be a common agreement: one, that we are TESTING PRINCIPLES. sinful and of sinful tendency; the other, that we can be saved only in a deliverance from sin and a moral harmonization with God. Without such facts there is no place for the redemptive work of Christ, and no saving office which he can fulfill. What, then, is the need for the redemptive mediation of Christ in a

<sup>1</sup> *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. xii, pp. 80-82.

<sup>2</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 563-589.

<sup>3</sup> *The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement*, pp. 285-395.

<sup>4</sup> *The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice*, pp. 14-16.

salvation so realized? Why cannot man achieve his own deliverance from sin and harmonize himself with God? Why cannot God achieve both without a mediation in Christ? Every theory of atonement that may properly be called such must answer to these questions. Every theory must, in logical consistency, accord with the answer given. The true theory will be found in accord with the true answer. We thus have principles whereby we may test theories, and determine their legitimacy or truth. Some give a determining position to one fact in the need, some to another. Some find all the need in the moral disabilities of man; others find all in God. Every theory must take its place in a scientific classification according to the dominant fact of need which it alleges.

By these same principles we may greatly reduce the popular number of theories—such as given by Professor Crawford. Such reduction is specially possible respecting theories wholly grounded in certain disabilities of our moral state. The subjective facts of moral disability, out of which the need for a redemptive mediation is alleged to arise, may be numerically many, and yet so one in kind that one objective law of redemptive help will answer for all. And the law of redemptive help, though revealed in many facts, may still be one law, and working only in one mode. Hence, theories of atonement popularly numbered after such many facts, may all be reduced to unity under one form of moral need, or under one law of redemptive help. In a like mode there may be a reduction, though not an equal one, of theories which ground the necessity for an atonement in the requirements of the divine nature. In truth, the real necessity for an atonement arises in the nature of God, especially in the offices of his justice, and gives place for only two legitimate theories—two alternatively, one of which must be the true theory.

For illustration we may apply these principles of classification and reduction to theories, popularly given as such, which are grounded simply in a need arising out of moral disabilities in man. The theories which we shall name in the illustration are in fact but different phases of the theory of moral influence.

One theory is that Christ died as a martyr to his prophetic mission, and for the confirmation of the lessons of moral and religious truth which he gave to the world. This is the *Marturial* theory. It assumes our ignorance and our need of higher spiritual truth, and offers us redemptive help in Christ only through the moral influence of the lessons of higher religious truth which he gave.

In another view, the death of Christ fulfilled its chief office as

subservient to his resurrection, that he might thereby more fully disclose and verify the reality of a future life. Such disclosure is for the sake of its helpful religious influence in the present life. Men are strongly propense to a mere secular life. They greatly need, therefore, the practical influence of a revealed future life. Such help Christ brings through his resurrection, for which his death served as the prerequisite.

He died as an example of self-sacrificing devotion to the good of others. He so died that through the moral force of so impressive a lesson we might be led into a life of disinterested benevolence. Man is selfish and needs such an example of self-sacrificing devotion to the good of others as Christ gives. Such are the facts which this view emphasizes. But all the redemptive help which it represents is in the practical force of a moral lesson.

In another view the mission and work of Christ were for the manifestation of God as among men in an incarnation; that he might "show us the Father" in his sympathy and forgiving grace. Man lacks faith, is in doubt, is in a servile fear of God, and suffers the moral paralysis of such states of mind. He needs encouragement, assurance of the kindness and love of God. This also is redemptive help only through the salutary influence of a moral lesson.

Such, indeed, are all the popularly named theories which ground the need of a mediatorial economy merely in our own moral disabilities. If any exception should be made it is in the case of the realistic and mystical schemes, in which, however, the chief difference is in the mode of redemptive help. But in all that class of which we have given examples, the need, revealed in many variant facts, is yet one; and the redemptive help, coming in various forms, is operative only in one mode. Man is ignorant, and needs higher religious truth; of feeble motivity to duty, and needs its lessons in a more impressive form; of strong secular tendency, and needs the practical force of a revealed future life; selfish, and needs the helpful example of self-sacrificing love; in a servile fear of God, and needs the assurance of his fatherly kindness. So Christ comes in all these forms of needed help. But in the deeper sense, the need is one, and the redemptive help is one. And these theories, many in popular enumeration, are all one theory—the theory of moral influence. Its claims will be considered a little further on. For the present it may be said that no issue will be joined respecting either such need in us or such help in Christ as here alleged. But such is not the real necessity for an atonement, and such is not the true atonement.

5. *Ground for only Two Theories.*—In a strict or scientific sense there are but two theories of atonement. We have seen how many in popular enumeration are reducible to the one theory of moral influence. Others, as will appear, in their review, are so void of essential facts that they hold no rightful place as theories. Nor is the scheme of moral influence in any strict sense a theory of atonement, because it neither answers to the real necessity in the case nor admits an objective ground of forgiveness in the mediation of Christ.

Nor can there be more than two theories. This limitation is determined by the law of a necessary accordance between the necessity for an atonement and the nature of the atonement as answering to that necessity. This fact we have, that the vicarious sufferings of Christ are an objective ground of the divine forgiveness. There is a necessity for such a ground; his sufferings are an atonement only as they answer to this necessity. Hence the nature of the atonement is determined by the nature of its necessity. Now this necessity must lie either in the requirement of an absolute justice which must punish sin, or in the rectoral office of justice as an obligation to conserve the interest of moral government. There can be no other necessity for an atonement as an objective ground of forgiveness. Nor does any scheme of a real atonement in Christ either represent or imply another. Thus there is place for two theories, but only two. There is place for a theory of absolute substitution, according to which the redemptive sufferings of Christ were strictly penal, and the fulfillment of an absolute obligation of justice in the punishment of sin. This is the theory of satisfaction, and answers to a necessity in the first sense given. There is also place for a theory of conditional substitution, according to which the redemptive sufferings of Christ were not the punishment of sin, but such a substitute for the rectoral office of penalty as renders forgiveness, on proper conditions, consistent with the requirements of moral government. This answers to a necessity in the second sense given, and accords with the deeper principles of the governmental theory. The truth of atonement must be with the one or the other of these theories.

## II. SUMMARY REVIEWS.

Most of the theories noticed in this section we call theories only after popular usage. They are not strictly such. While some have peculiar phases or elements, they are mostly based on the principles of the moral theory. We shall attempt but a summary review of them. It will suffice to notice their leading facts, to

ascertain the nature of the redemption in Christ which they represent, and to determine their place in a proper classification. A few words may be added upon their respective claims.

1. *Theory of Vicarious Repentance*.—We may so designate a theory specially represented by Dr. John McLeod Campbell. It is grounded in the idea of the profoundest identification of Christ with humanity in the incarnation. Therein he takes our experiences into his own consciousness; enters into the deepest sympathy with us, even in our sense of sin, and of the divine displeasure. Thus he takes upon his own soul the burden and sorrow of our sins, and makes the truest, deepest confession of their demerit and of the just displeasure of God against them. Divine justice is therewith satisfied and we are forgiven. “This confession, as to its own nature, must have been *a perfect Amen in humanity to the judgment of God on the sin of man.*” “He who so responds to the divine wrath against sin, saying, ‘Thou art righteous, O Lord, who judgest so,’ is necessarily receiving the full apprehension and realization of that wrath, as well as of that sin against which it comes into his soul and spirit, into the bosom of the divine humanity, and, so receiving it, he responds to it with a perfect response—a response from the depths of that divine humanity—and *in that perfect response he absorbs it.* For that response has all the elements of a perfect repentance in humanity for all the sin of man; a perfect sorrow; a perfect contrition; all the elements of such a repentance, and that in absolute perfection; all, except the personal consciousness of sin; and by that perfect response in Amen to the mind of God in relation to sin is the wrath of God rightly met, and that is accorded to divine justice which is its due and could alone satisfy it.”<sup>1</sup>

This scheme recognizes the demerit of sin and a retributive justice in God. It is a scheme of vicarious atonement, but in entire dissent from the theory of satisfaction, as it denies the possibility of penal substitution. It clearly holds repentance to be all that justice requires as the ground of forgiveness. In this it dissents from both the Anselmic and Grotian theories, and identifies itself with the Socinian. It admits no necessity for an objective atonement, either in an absolute penal justice or in the interest of moral government. Any necessity for redemptive help which the scheme may consistently allow must be grounded in an inability in us to a true repentance. If a vicarious repentance is sufficient for our forgiveness, so must be a true repentance in us. This fact also classes the scheme with the moral theory.

This special view is open to many objections. The Scriptures

<sup>1</sup> Campbell: *The Nature of the Atonement*, pp. 118, 119.

give it no support. It will not interpret the explicit terms of atonement, nor answer to the real necessity for one. Nor  
OBJECTIONS. is there less difficulty in the notion of a vicarious repentance than in that of vicarious punishment. Then the logical sequence of such a vicarious repentance, with its attributed effects, is the releasement of all from the requirement of repentance, and the unconditional forgiveness of all.<sup>1</sup>

2. *Theory of Redemption by Love.*—It is according to the Scriptures that our redemption has its original in the love of God. But this fact does not determine the nature of such redemption, or whether it be an objective ground of forgiveness originating in the divine love, or merely the moral influence of its manifestation in Christ, operative as a subduing and reconciling power in the soul. Dr. Young is a special exponent of the latter view. There is really very little in the theory peculiar to himself. This is specially true of its constituent facts. Any peculiarity lies rather in their combination and in the manner of their expression. The author writes with perspicuity and force. His principles are clearly given. It is easy to determine and classify his theory.

Certain facts are postulated respecting spiritual laws. Death is  
SPIRITUAL LAWS. the necessary consequence of sin, as life is of holiness. The only salvation, therefore, is in the destruction of sin as a subjective fact. This is the work of the redemption in Christ. “The laws of nature are owing solely to the will and fiat of the Creator. He ordained them, and had such been his pleasure they might have been altered in ten thousand ways. But the laws of the spiritual universe do not depend even on the highest will. The great God did not make them; they are eternal as he is. The great God cannot repeal them; they are immutable as he is.” “Without aid from any quarter they avenge themselves, and exact, and continue without fail to exact, so long as the evil remains, the amount of penalty—visible and invisible—to the veriest jot and tittle which the deed of violation deserves.” “No term of punishment is fixed, none can be fixed. One thing, and one thing only, determines the duration of the punishment, and that is the continuance of evil in the soul. The evil continuing, its attendant penalty is a necessity, which even God could not conquer.” “There is one, but there is only one, way in which the tremendous doom of the sinful soul can be escaped in consistency with the great laws of the spiritual universe. If sin were cast out the death which issues solely from sin would be effectually prevented.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cave: *The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice*, pp. 350–362.

<sup>2</sup> Young: *The Life and Light of Men*, pp. 82, 85, 93, 97.



The theory of redemption is from facts so stated. There is no need of an objective ground of forgiveness. The whole need is for a moral force working in the soul itself, and in a manner to destroy the power of subjective evil. All this is provided for in the manifestation of the divine love in the sacrifice of the cross. Such is God's method of redemption. "By the one true sacrifice of Christ, an act of divine self-sacrifice by incarnate, crucified love, he aims a blow at the root of evil within man's heart. . . . He breaks the hard heart by the overwhelming pressure of pure, almighty mercy, in our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup>

We specially object to the one-sided redemption so constructed. We fully accept the postulates respecting spiritual laws as involving an absolute distinction between holiness and sin; though we do not admit the extreme view of their self-execution, which might dispense with a moral government as under an actual divine administration. God ever rules in the moral realm, and dispenses rewards to both holiness and sin. The necessity of a deliverance from sin as a subjective evil in order to salvation we have already affirmed. Indeed, it is a very familiar truth. And that the divine love revealed in the sacrifice of the cross has a great office in our moral reformation is also a very familiar truth. It ever finds utterance in Christian exhortation and entreaty to a new spiritual life. And it is an affected or mistaken originality when men give prominence to such truths as original discoveries.

In principle the scheme is one with that of moral influence. The atonement is all in a power of moral motive as embodied in manifested love, and operative only through the soul's own cognition and motivity. Like every such theory, it utterly fails to answer to the real need of an atonement as revealed in the Scriptures and manifest in the reason of the case. It has no fair interpretation for the many Scripture texts which so directly attribute forgiveness to the redemption in the blood of Christ; nor does it give any proper recognition to the mission of the Spirit through his mediation as the efficient agency in our subjective redemption from sin.

3. *Theory of Self-propitiation by Self-sacrifice.*—We may so formulate the later theory of Dr. Bushnell. In his own account it supplements rather than supersedes his former theory: "The argument of my former treatise<sup>2</sup> was concerned in exhibiting the work of Christ as a reconciling power in men. This was conceived to be the whole import and effect of it. . . . I now propose to substitute for the latter half of my former treatise a different exposition;

<sup>1</sup> Young: *The Life and Light of Men*, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> *The Vicarious Sacrifice*.

composing thus a whole of doctrine that comprises both the reconciliation of men to God and of God to men."<sup>1</sup> He still holds the position that the main office of atonement is in its moral influence with men. Now, however, he finds an element in the divine propitiation; but it is not one that identifies his theory with either the Anselmic or Grotian atonement.

The new theory alleges a similarity of moral sentiment in God and men; and then, from an alleged requisite to a thorough human forgiveness, deduces a law of the divine forgiveness. We have retributive sentiments, disgust, and resentment against the turpitude and wrong of sin. It is admitted that these feelings have an important function in moral discipline, and that they must be treated in subservience to that end. "Filling an office so important, they must not be extirpated under any pretext of forgiveness. They require to be somehow mastered, and somehow to remain. And the supreme art of forgiveness will consist in finding how to embrace the unworthy as if they were not unworthy, or how to have them still on hand when they will not suffer the forgiveness to pass. Which supreme art is the way of propitiation—always concerned in the reconciliation of moral natures separated by injuries."<sup>2</sup>

What, then, is the mode of this supreme art of reconciliation? What is the essential requisite to its realization in a free and full forgiveness? The requirement is from the nature of the hinderance to the forgiveness in our moral resentments against sin; and hence for some measure of self-propitiation which shall master these resentments, and issue in a thorough forgiveness. How, then, may this self-propitiation be realized? By some manner of self-sacrifice for the good of those against whom we have such resentments. "Suffering, in short, is with all moral natures the necessary correlate of forgiveness. The man, that is, cannot say, 'I forgive,' and have the saying end it; he must somehow atone both himself and his enemy by a painstaking, rightly so called, that has power to recast the terms of their relationship."<sup>3</sup> Such is the requisite to forgiveness; some personal sacrifice for the good of the offender, and not only as a power of moral influence with him, but also as a necessary self-propitiation toward him in the party offended. Such is the law of human forgiveness.

Then this same law is applied to the divine forgiveness. It is so applied on the ground of a "grand analogy, or almost identity, that subsists between our moral nature and that of God; so that our pathologies and those of God make faith-

<sup>1</sup> *Forgiveness and Law*, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 48, 49.

ful answer to each other, and he is brought so close to us that almost any thing that occurs in the workings or exigencies of our moral instincts may even be expected in his." <sup>1</sup> It is hence concluded that God has such hinderance to forgiveness in his moral resentments against sin as we have, and therefore requires the same means of self-propitiation. He forgives just as we do. "One kind of forgiveness matches and interprets the other, for they have a common property. They come to the same point when they are genuine, and require also exactly the same preparations and conditions precedent." <sup>2</sup> So God must propitiate himself in cost and suffering for our good. This he did in the sacrifice of the cross: "that sublime act of cost, in which God has bent himself downward, in loss and sorrow, over the hard face of sin, to say, and saying to make good, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.'" <sup>3</sup>

Many of these facts might be admitted without accepting the doctrine of atonement thereon constructed. The retributive sentiment is with us an original fact, and in its own nature a hinderance to forgiveness. There are resentments against injury and wrong which may strengthen the hinderance. But this law is without uniformity. The retributive feeling rarely exists alone. It is usually in association with other feelings which may either greatly hinder or greatly help any disposition to forgiveness. In a cruel, hard nature the associated feelings may co-operate with the retributive sentiment to prevent all disposition to forgiveness, and equally to prevent all acts of personal kindness which might placate the vindictive resentment; while the tendencies of a generous, kindly nature may be helpful to a forgiving disposition. There are gracious, loving natures ever ready with a full forgiveness, without any self-atonement in charities to the offender. The more is this true as the soul is the more deeply imbued with the divine love.

Now the multiformity and contrariety of such facts in men deny to Dr. Bushnell the analogy from which he concludes the necessary means of the divine propitiation and forgiveness. Self-propitiation in a sacrificing charity to the offender is not "with all moral natures the necessary correlate of forgiveness." And with error in the premise the conclusion is fallacious. But were it even true that this is the only law of forgiveness with men it would not hence follow that such is the only law of forgiveness with God.

It should be distinctly noted that here we have no concern with any requirement of divine justice as maintained either in the satisfaction theory or in the rectoral. Dr. Bushnell rejects both, with all that is vital in them. Nor does he admit

<sup>1</sup> *Forgiveness and Law*, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

any necessity for an atonement on the ground of either. In his scheme the necessity lies in a personal disposition of God as a resentment against the injury and wrong of sin. It is not in the interest of our criticism to deny all hinderance in the divine resentment against sin to a propitious disposition ; but we confidently affirm such a transcendent love in God as would, in the absence of all other hinderance, wait for no placation of his personal wrath in self-sacrifice, but instantly go forth to the satisfaction of its yearnings in the freest, fullest forgiveness. If men imbued with the divine love will so forgive, much more would the infinite love. The position has the highest *a fortiori* proof. That divine love which finds its way to forgiveness through the blood of the cross could suffer no delay by any personal resentment against sin requiring placation in costly ministries to the offender. The grace of redemption in the blood of Christ is infinitely greater than the grace of forgiveness. Hence the free gift of the former in the very state of personal resentment alleged denies the assumed hinderance therein to the freest, fullest forgiveness.<sup>1</sup>

This scheme, therefore, does not answer to the real necessity for the redemptive mediation of Christ. Nor does it rightly interpret the office of his sacrifice. The necessity concerns the profoundest interest of moral government, and hence arises in the very perfections of God as moral ruler, not in his personal resentment against sin. And the sacrifice of Christ answers to this necessity in atonement for sin by rendering forgiveness consistent with the interest concerned.

Such a scheme is far deeper and grander than Dr. Bushnell's. Indeed, his is neither profound nor grand. It admits no principle or interest as concerned in forgiveness, the disregard of which would be as contrary to the divine goodness as to the divine justice. In the analogy of certain "pathologies," of personal resentment against sin, the scheme lowers God into the likeness of men ; so that in him, as in them, the great hinderance to forgiveness is in these same personal resentments. Thus "one kind of forgiveness matches and interprets the other, for they have a common property. They come to the same point when they are genuine, and require also the same preparations and conditions precedent." The theory commands no lofty view of the divine goodness. Nor can it give any proper significance to the sacred proclamation of the divine love as the original of the redemptive economy. Such a love is held in no bonds of personal resentment. The theory has no profound and glorious doctrine

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v, 10 ; viii, 32.

of divine love ; and, indeed, is found on a true sounding to be shallow.

Its scientific position is easily given. As compared with the moral theory it has a somewhat differencing element, which carries the atonement into the reconciliation of God. But this element is insufficient to constitute a really distinct theory. Negatively, and therefore fatally, it is one with the moral theory. It denies all hindrance to forgiveness in the divine justice, whether in its purely retributive function or in its rectoral office. This fact thoroughly differentiates it from both the satisfaction and governmental theories, and closely affiliates it with the moral theory.

4. *Realistic Theory*.—Closely kindred to this is the mystical theory, next to be noticed. Each is multiform, and the two often coalesce. These facts, with a lack of explicit and definite statement, render it difficult either to apprehend them or to present them in a clear view.

In the realistic theory some represent Christ as the typical or ideal man, using these terms vaguely, but with the assumption of some manner of relationship between him and us, whereby we are the recipients of a redemptive influence working for our moral renovation and salvation. Others carry the conception of Christ into the notion of a generic humanity, of which we are individuated forms. The notion must answer somewhat to the scholastic realism, or to that of the Augustinian anthropology, which identifies the human race in a real oneness with Adam.

Nor did the incarnation bring Christ into any realistic connection with human nature which is in itself redeeming and saving. It did bring him into union with human nature, but into a thoroughly individual form—as much so as that of any individual man. So far from such a realistic identification, he stands apart from all human nature, except the one individual form of his incarnation. Hence that incarnation had not in itself the efficiency of redemption, but was in order to an atonement in the death of Christ, that he might come to us severally in the grace of forgiveness and in the regenerating agency of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> Such is the Scripture doctrine of atonement and salvation, but which no realism represents.<sup>2</sup>

5. *Mystical Theory*.—This theory, as previously stated, is, at least in some of its facts, closely kindred to the realistic. It is

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv, 4, 5 ; Heb. ii, 14, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Rigg : *Modern Anglican Theology*, pp. 130-140 ; Crawford : *The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement*, pp. 303-318.

chiefly based on the idea of a real union of Christ with the human soul. In this union is realized his redeeming and saving efficiency. So far the theory finds salvation in a subjective sanctification, and makes little account of justification in the forgiveness of sin. Hence it makes slight account of an objective reconciliation in the death of Christ, in comparison of his subjective work of redemption. The weighty objection to this view is that it gives us a one-sided soteriology. It offers the benefits of an objective atonement without the atonement itself.

There is in our salvation a living union with Christ.<sup>1</sup> This is a truth of all evangelical theology. But in the order of nature forgiveness must precede this spiritual union. So the atonement in the blood of Christ as the only ground of forgiveness is a distinct fact from his saving union with us. Strictly, the mystical scheme omits the atonement proper, and belongs to another part of soteriology.<sup>2</sup>

6. *Middle Theory*.—The same theory is also called the Arian—  
THE THEORY. not, however, as originating with Arius, but because of its association with an Arian Christology. It holds that forgiveness is granted to repenting sinners for Christ's sake, or in view of his mediatorial service. This is not a forgiveness on the ground of his death as a vicarious atonement for sin, but in reward of his self-sacrificing service in the interest of the human race. Higher ground is thus taken than in the moral theory. The mediation of Christ has a higher office than a mere practical lesson: "Not only to give us an example; not only to assure us of remission, or to procure our Lord a commission to publish the forgiveness of sin: but, moreover, to obtain that forgiveness by doing what God in his wisdom and goodness judged fit and expedient to be done in order to the forgiveness of sin; and without which he did not think it fit or expedient to grant the forgiveness of sin."<sup>3</sup>

Yet, with all these facts, the theory denies a proper substitutional  
DEFICIENCY. atonement, and hence is unscriptural. It is in very thorough dissent from the theory of satisfaction. In the maintenance of a fitness, or wise expediency, in the mediation of Christ as the reason of forgiveness, especially in its relation to the interest of moral government, it makes some approach toward the rectoral view, but in the full exposition falls far short of it. In some features it reminds one of the theory of Anselm, though the two are far from being identical.

<sup>1</sup> John xv, 5, 6; Rom. viii, 10; Col. iii, 3, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 581-583; Bruce: *The Humiliation of Christ*, p. 315.

<sup>3</sup> John Taylor: *Scripture Doctrine of Atonement*, No. 152.

Dr. Hill reviews the theory in a clear analysis and statement, deriving his information of it from Dr. Thomas Balguy, Dr. Price, and others.<sup>1</sup> The treatment is with the characteristic fairness and perspicuity of the author. After a lucid statement of the theory he notes its very serious defects, but at the same time regards it as a well-wrought and beautiful structure.<sup>2</sup>

7. *Theory of Conditional Penal Substitution.*—We do not here appropriate any given formula of atonement, but use terms which properly designate a theory held by not a few. THE VIEW. The view is, that the redemptive sufferings of Christ were penally endured in behalf of sinners; that as such they constitute a proper ground of forgiveness; but that the forgiveness is really conditional. There is present the idea of a necessary retribution of sin, or of a vicarious punishment in order to forgiveness. If there be sin, there must also be punishment: this is the idea. Yet the reason of this necessity, and the relation of penal substitution to forgiveness, are not given with any exactness, as in the scheme of satisfaction.

The penal substitution is conditional, in the sense that the forgiveness provided is contingent upon the free action of sinners respecting the required terms. They are SENSE OF CON-  
DITIONAL. free to repent and believe, and equally free not to repent and believe. In the former case they are free through enabling grace; in the latter, as not subject to an irresistible power of grace. On a proper repentance and faith they are forgiven on the ground of Christ's vicarious punishment; but on the refusal of such terms they are answerable in penalty for their sins, and none the less so on account of his penal substitution.

The scheme is a construction apparently between the satisfaction and governmental theories. It rejects the absolute substitution of the former, and adds the penal element to the proper conditional substitution of the latter. Such, in substance, is the theory of all who hold both the penal quality of the redemptive sufferings of Christ and a real conditionality of forgiveness. THE THEORY  
OF MANY. Hence, we were entirely correct in representing it as the theory of not a few. Many leading Arminians may be classed in such a scheme; though we think it for them an unscientific position. Arminius himself maintained both penal substitution and a real conditionality of forgiveness.<sup>3</sup> Grotius held both, though with far less explicitness respecting the former. Some of Richard Watson's

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures in Divinity*, pp. 422-427.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan: *The Doctrine of Justification*, pp. 165-168.

<sup>3</sup> Writings (Nichols's): vols. i, pp. 28, 29; ii, pp. 496-499.

statements would assign to him the same position. It is the theory maintained in the more recent and very able work of Marshall Randles.<sup>1</sup>

Is there room for such a theory? There is a broad ground of distinction between the satisfaction and governmental theories. But such a difference is not always room for another. Two theories may so appropriate all possible facts and principles of the question that the truth in the case must be with one or the other. Such are the facts respecting these two theories of atonement. Nor can a penal substitution be conditional. Penalty, as an instrument of justice, has only two offices: one in the punishment of sin as such, the other, in the interest of the government. And though punishment is only for the sake of its rectoral end, it is none the less strictly retributive, or inflicted only on the ground of demerit. There is no other just punishment. Nor could any other fulfill its rectoral office. Then, if the punishment be inflicted upon a substitute, the substitution must, in the nature of the case, be real and absolute. Justice can have no further retributive claim against the sinners so substituted; not any more than if they had suffered in themselves the full punishment of their sins. Here the consistency of the case is with the doctrine of satisfaction. All so replaced by a substitute in punishment must be discharged from personal amenability to penalty. Hence a real conditionality of forgiveness has no consistency with penal substitution.

We are fully aware that rigid satisfactionists assert the conditionality of forgiveness. This, however, does not void the intrinsic inconsistency in the case. Nor is what they assert a real conditionality; certainly not such as Arminianism ever maintains. For instance, faith is with them the condition of forgiveness; but they really deny the contingency of faith. In their scheme, it is conditional only as precedent to forgiveness in a necessary order of facts in the process of salvation. It takes its place as a purchased benefit of redemption in the process of salvation monergistically wrought. Irresistible grace is efficient cause to the faith, as to every other fact in the actual salvation. Christ would be wronged of his purchase were it not so wrought in every redeemed soul. Here, indeed, is the real consistency with satisfactionists. But with all who hold a conditional penal substitution, especially with all Arminians, forgiveness has a real conditionality. Here, indeed, is a main issue between Calvinism and Arminianism in an unended polemics of centuries. It is the historic issue of monergism and synergism. The latter, with its

<sup>1</sup> *Substitution: Atonement.*



full meaning of conditionality in forgiveness and salvation, is ever the unyielding and unwavering position of Arminianism.

The question recurs respecting the consistency of such a conditionality with penal substitution ; or whether there can be a conditional penal substitution. Nothing is gained by asserting simply the penal character of Christ's redemptive sufferings, with the omission of their strictly substitutive office. In such a view it would be impossible to show any just ground or proper end of the punishment. Sin is the only ground of just and wise punishment. Penal substitution must never depart from this principle. If Christ suffered punishment, our sin must have been the ground of his punishment. And our sin must have suffered merited punishment in him. This, and only this, could answer to the idea of a necessity for punishment in the case of sin—a necessity arising in the relation of sin to a purely retributive justice. There could be no pretense even to such a punishment, except as our sins were imputed to Christ, and so made punishable in him. But in such a case the penal substitution is real and absolute ; sin suffers its merited punishment ; absolute justice receives its full retributive claim. No further penalty can fall either upon Christ or upon the sinners replaced in his penal substitution ; and no more upon them than upon him. Their discharge is a requirement of justice itself. Hence there cannot be a conditional penal substitution.

8. *Leading Theories.*—We here name together the moral, satisfaction, and governmental theories as the leading ones. But we name them simply with a view to the indication of their general character, as prefatory to their more formal discussion.

It is important that formulas of doctrine should consist of thoroughly definitive terms. This, however, is not always an easy attainment. There is no such attainment in these formulas of atonement. No one gives what is cardinal in the theory which it represents, nor clearly discriminates it from the others ; and it is only in their discussion that we shall ascertain their respective principles and distinctive facts. Their general sense may be very briefly given.

The moral theory regards the redemptive work of Christ as accomplished through his example and lessons of religious truth, operative as a practical influence with men.

The theory of satisfaction makes fundamental the satisfaction of an absolute retributive justice by the punishment of sin in Christ as the substitute of sinners in penalty. It admits the offices of atonement represented by the other two theories, but only as incidental.

The governmental theory gives chief prominence to the office of justice in the interest of moral government, yet holds to a proper sense of satisfaction, and gives full place to the principle of moral influence, not, however, as a constituent fact of atonement, but as a practical result of the redemptive economy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Daniel T. Fisk: "The Necessity of the Atonement," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April, 1861. The article of Dr. Fisk presents these theories in a very clear view.

## CHAPTER V.

## THEORY OF MORAL INFLUENCE.

THIS theory has already come into view, and more than once. It is one of the three which we propose to treat more fully than those previously noticed. We do not concede to it a scientific position. Strictly, it is not a theory of atonement; yet it is such in popular enumeration, and one of no little prominence. Its treatment, however, will require no great elaboration, as we already have its principles; and especially as the theory is one of simplicity and clearness. With all its phases its fundamental principle is ever one and easily apprehended.

## I. FACTS OF THE THEORY.

1. *The Redemptive Law.*—The mediation of Christ fulfills its redemptive office in the economy of human salvation through the influence of its own lessons and motives, as practically operative upon the soul and life of men. Such is the office of his incarnation, if admitted; of his example, teachings, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension. By the lessons of truth so given and enforced it is sought to enlighten men; to address to them higher motives to a good life; to awaken love in grateful response to the consecration of so worthy a life to their good; to lead them to repentance and piety through the moral force of such a manifestation of the love of God; to furnish them a perfect example in the life of Christ, and through his personal influence to transform them into his own likeness.<sup>1</sup>

Advocates may vary the summary of facts, as they may differ respecting the Christ, but the result is simply to lessen or increase the possible moral force, without any change of principle. The law of redemptive help is ever one, whether Christ be viewed as essentially divine or only as human. With his divinity and incarnation the synthesis of facts may embody the larger force of religious motive; but this is all the advantage from the higher Christology. Such is the moral theory of redemption. Dr. Bushnell calls it "the moral power view;" but such a formula neither alters the redemptive law nor adds to its saving

<sup>1</sup> Bruce: *The Humiliation of Christ*, pp. 326-328.

efficiency. The only advantage is in a little more force of expression.

2. *Socinian*.—Historically, the theory synchronizes with Socinus, deceased 1604, and, in the stricter sense, originated with him. Hence it may properly be called Socinian. Abelard, following soon after Anselm, propounded similar views, which were favored somewhat by Peter Lombard and others, but gave no exact construction to a new theory in opposition to the more prevalent church doctrine. He exerted but a transient disturbing influence upon this great question, and left the Anselmic doctrine in its chief position.<sup>1</sup>

With Socinus the moral theory sprung naturally from his system of theology, especially from his Christology. In the assertion of Christ's simple humanity, doctrinal consistency required him to reject all schemes of a real objective atonement, and to interpret the mediation of Christ in accord with his own Christology. The moral theory is the proper result. It is the scheme which his system of theology required, and the only one which it will consistently admit. Affiliated forms of Christianity—such as Unitarianism and Universalism—naturally and consistently adopt the same theory. It has a natural affinity with all rationalistic views of Christianity.

3. *Its Dialectics*.—The moral scheme, arising in a system of theology so diverse from the orthodox faith, and so antagonistic itself to the orthodox atonement, was inevitably polemical, and both defensively and offensively. This naturally arose, in the first part, from the fact that the Scriptures, in what seems their obvious sense, affirm an objective atonement in Christ; and in the second part, from the fact that the doctrine of atonement then most prevalent was open to serious valid objections, and especially to very plausible ones.

But little attempt was made to build up the doctrine on the ground of the Scriptures. The main attempt was to set aside the Scripture proofs alleged in support of the church doctrine. In this endeavor the new exegesis had little regard for well-established laws of hermeneutics. It dealt freely in captious criticism, and in the most gratuitous and forced interpretations. The exigency of the case required such a method. Scripture facts and utterances are so clear and emphatic in the affirmation of an objective atonement in the mediation of Christ as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness, that the new scheme

<sup>1</sup> Shedd : *History of Christian Doctrine*, vol. ii, pp. 286-288 ; Cunningham : *Historical Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 294-301 ; Hill : *Lectures in Divinity*, pp. 414-422.

found in such a method its only possible defense against their crushing force. We have no occasion to follow the scheme in all this exegesis. The truth of an atonement has none; and the round of following would be a long and weary one; for the whole issue concerns other great questions of doctrine, especially of anthropology and Christology, as well as the direct question of atonement.

Within the sphere of reason the new scheme was boldly offensive in its method. Here it had more apparent strength, and could be plausible even when not really potent.

APPEAL TO  
REASON.

But any real strength bore rather against a particular form of redemptive doctrine than against the truth itself. The array of objections, wrought in all the vigor of rhetoric and passion, is nugatory against the true doctrine—as will appear in our treatment of objections. Nor are we answerable in the case of such as are valid against a doctrine which we do not accept, although brought from a theological stand-point which we utterly reject. The theory of satisfaction, as constructed in the Reformed theology, and now held as the more common Calvinistic view, is open to such objections. And an objection is none the less valid because made in the interest of a theory much further from the truth than the one against which it is alleged.

Beyond the ground of valid objection to the doctrine of satisfaction, Socinianism finds a sphere of plausible objection to the atonement itself. A fluency of words, even with little wealth or potency of thought, may easily declaim against its unreason, its injustice, its aspersion of the divine goodness, its implication of vindictiveness in God, its subversion of moral distinctions and obligations. Very gifted minds have given to such declamation all possible force. It has the force of plausibility on false assumptions and issues, but is impotent in the light of truth. This will appear in our treatment of objections to the atonement.

4. *Truth of Moral Influence.*—The real issue with the Socinian scheme does not concern the truth of a helpful moral influence in the economy of redemption. This any true doctrine of atonement must fully hold. The issue is against making such influence the only form and the sum of redemptive help; indeed, against making it a constituent fact of the atonement as such.

The moral influence of the mediation of Christ is from its own facts, and not a part of the atonement itself. If, in the case of a rebellion, a son of the sovereign should, at great sacrifice, interpose in such provisional measures as would render forgiveness on proper submission consistent with the interest of the sovereignty; if the sovereign should be concur-

FROM ATONE-  
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ring with the son in such provision ; and if such grace on the part of both the sovereign and the son should be successfully pleaded with those in rebellion as a reason for submission and loyalty, it would surely be unreason to maintain that such moral influence was the whole atonement in the case. It would be unreason to maintain that it was any part of it. It would be equally so with the submission thus induced as a necessary condition of forgiveness. The moral influence in the case presupposes the atonement and arises out of the grace of its provisions. Without such grace there could be no appeals of moral potency. The very pleas which give persuasive force to the pleading are facts of grace in an atonement previously made. Hence the practical force or moral influence of a provision of forgiveness cannot be that provision itself, nor any part of it. Such are the facts respecting the atonement in Christ. Its power of moral influence lies in the infinite grace revealed in its provisions. The Son of God, as the gift of the Father, died in atonement for our sins, that we might be forgiven and saved. Here is the plea of moral potency. But there can be no such plea, and, therefore, no such moral influence, without the prior fact of such grace. Hence the unreason of accounting the practical lesson, or moral influence of an atonement, the atonement itself, or any constituent part of it.

Thus the question of a helpful practical lesson in the economy of redemption is not one respecting its reality, but one respecting its place. The doctrine of a real atonement for sin gives the fullest recognition to such a moral influence, and represents its greatest possible force. Indeed, such an influence is the very life and power of all evangelistic work. And the real moral power of the cross is with the Churches to which it is a real atonement for sin. Through all the Christian centuries such an atonement has been the persuasive power of the Gospel. It is the living impulsion of all the great evangelistic enterprises of to-day. And, as the history of the past throws its light upon the future, the persuasive power of the Gospel in winning the coming generations to Christ must be in the moral pathos of a real atonement in his blood.

Such a doctrine of atonement embodies a power of persuasion infinitely greater than is possible to any scheme of redemptive help grounded in a Socinian Christology. In the one case we have a divine Mediator ; in the other, a human mediator ; in the one, a real atonement for sin ; in the other, no atonement for sin. In the former, the divinity of Christ, his divine Sonship, his incarnation, the profoundness of his humiliation, the depth of his suffering and shame of his cross—all go into

GREATEST  
MORAL  
POWER.

the atonement, and combine in a revelation of the divine holiness and love which embodies the highest potency of moral influence. And we are pleased to quote and adopt a very forceful expression of the marvelous moral power of the cross from one who himself denied an objective atonement for sin in the death of Christ, but was able to give such expression because he accepted all the divine verities respecting Christ upon which a true doctrine is constructed:

“ This is the unscrutable mystery of incarnate love ! the hidden spring of that moral power over the human heart which, in myriads of instances, has proved irresistible. On the one hand, God in Christ—in Christ in his life, in Christ on the cross—is reconciling men to himself and employing his mightiest instrument for recovering, gaining back, redeeming the world. On the other hand, Christ—Christ in his life, Christ on the cross—is God impersonated, so far as a human medium and method of impersonation could reach. Christ is the nature of God brought near and unveiled to human eyes. Christ is the heart of God laid open, that men might almost hear the beat of its unutterable throbbings, might almost feel the rush of its mighty pulsations. The incarnate in his life and in his death, in his words and in his deeds, in his whole character, and spirit, and work on earth, was ever unveiling the Father, and making a path for the Father into the human soul. But on the cross Christ presses into the very center of the world’s heart, takes possession of it, and there, in that center, preaches, as nowhere else was possible, the gospel of God’s love !”<sup>1</sup>

## II. ITS REFUTATION.

We already have the facts for the refutation of this theory. They are of two classes: one respecting the reality of an atonement in Christ, as the objective ground of forgiveness and salvation; the other respecting the necessity for such an atonement. The former we have verified by the Scriptures: the latter by both the Scriptures and the reason of the case. The theory of moral influence, denying, as it does, the atonement as the ground of forgiveness, and limiting the saving work of Christ to the office of a practical lesson of piety, has a most thorough refutation in these facts. We refer to them as previously given. This reference might here suffice: yet it is proper to bring this theory face to face with the facts and truths whereby it has its refutation. But we do not need a formal array of all as previously maintained. Nor need they be presented just in the order then observed. The theory is disproved :

1. *By the Fact of an Atonement.*—The fact of an objective atone-

<sup>1</sup> Young : *The Life and Light of Men*, pp. 40, 41.

ment in Christ is dependent upon the Scriptures for its revelation and proof. Even the conception of a scheme so stupendous in its character never could originate in any finite mind. The idea includes not only the fact of a vicarious sacrifice of Christ in our redemption, but also the vitally related truths of his divinity and incarnation. It includes, also, by necessary implication, the very truth of the divine Trinity and of the unity of personality in Christ as the God-man. Such truths are from above, as the redeeming Lord is, and spoken only from heaven. And as the Redeemer himself can be known only by revelation, so the full purpose of his mission in the incarnation, and the nature of his redeeming work, can be known only by revelation. But the great truths so given, and taking their place in vital relation to the saving work of Christ—truths of his divinity, incarnation, and personality as the God-man—clearly reveal an infinitely profounder purpose in his suffering and death than can be fulfilled in the office of a moral lesson. And Socinianism, in all its phases, consistently rejects these divine truths in a system of theology which maintains the moral theory of atonement. But their rejection is not their disproof. And their truth, as given in all the clearness and authority of revelation, is conclusive against this theory.

Then we have the fact of an atonement, not only as the logical implication of great truths so vitally connected with it, but also in such facts and terms of Scripture as clearly contain and directly assert it.

We have the Gospel as a message of forgiveness and salvation. Such blessings are proclaimed in Christ, and in him only. They are specially offered through his sufferings and death. Here is the fact of an atonement.

In the more specific terms of atonement Christ, in his sufferings and death, in his very blood, is our reconciliation, our propitiation, our redemption. He is such for us as sinners, and as the ground of our forgiveness. These are vital facts in the economy of redemption, and the very source of its practical lesson. And how one-sided!—indeed, how no-sided!—the scheme which accounts the lesson all, and rejects the atonement out of which it arises! The theory of moral influence renders no satisfactory account of these terms. It is powerless for their consistent interpretation. It is, therefore, a false theory. No doctrine of atonement can be true which will not fairly interpret the terms of Scripture in which it is expressed.

In other terms, Christ is set forth in his death as a sacrifice for



sin, and one to be interpreted in the light of the typical sacrifices appertaining to earlier economies of religion; in his high-priestly office offering up himself as a sacrifice for sin; in his high-priestly office in heaven, into which he enters with his own blood, making intercession for us. These are facts of a real atonement in Christ, and conclusive against the moral theory.

2. *By its Necessity.*—The necessity of an atonement in the blood of Christ as the ground of forgiveness is a truth of the Scriptures. Thus it behoved Christ to suffer and die, that repentance and remission of sins might be preached in his name.<sup>1</sup> There is salvation in no other.<sup>2</sup> If righteousness, or forgiveness, were by the law Christ is dead in vain.<sup>3</sup> If righteousness, or forgiveness, were possible by any law given, then life would be by the law.<sup>4</sup> The same necessity for an atonement in Christ is affirmed by the requirement and necessity of faith in him as the condition of salvation. What will the moral scheme do with such facts? How will it interpret such texts? It has no power fairly to dispose of them, or to interpret them consistently with its own principles. It has, therefore, no claim to recognition as a true theory of atonement.

And how will the moral scheme answer for the necessity of an atonement as manifest in the very reason of the case?

This necessity concerns the profoundest interests of moral government. They require the conservation of law. Such law requires the enforcing sanction of penalty. Hence its remission imperatively requires some provisional substitute which shall fulfill its rectoral function. The moral scheme offers no such substitute. It must ignore the most patent facts of the case. It must deny the leading truths of anthropology, as clearly given in both sacred and secular history. It must attribute to forgiveness a facility and indifference consistent, somewhat, with mere personal relations, but utterly inconsistent with the interests of government; most of all, with the requirements of the divine moral government. The moral theory, therefore, gives no answer to the real necessity for an atonement. Yet such an answer is an imperative requirement. The theory must be rejected. The necessity for an atonement is its refutation.

3. *By the Peculiar Saving Work of Christ.*—The theory of moral influence, by its deepest principles and by its very content and limitation, implies and maintains that Christ is a Saviour in no other mode than any good man is, or may be. The good man who, by his example, religious instruction, and per-

PROOFS OF NE-  
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THEORY.

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NO OTHER.

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv, 46, 47.

<sup>2</sup> Acts iv, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. ii, 21.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. iii, 21.

sonal influence, leads a sinner to repentance and a good life, saves him as really and fully as Christ saves any sinner, and in the very same mode. The law of salvation is identical in the two cases. The mode of redemptive help is one; the saving force one. And the sole difference between Christ and any good man in saving sinners is in the measure of religious influence which they respectively exert. Many special facts respecting Christ may be freely admitted. To him may be conceded a special divine mission, a superior character, higher spiritual endowment, greater gifts of religious instruction, a life of matchless graces, deeds, and sacrifices; and that all combine in a potency of unequaled practical force. Still, he is a Saviour in no peculiar mode, but only through a higher moral influence. This is the sum of his distinction. All his saving work is through a helpful religious lesson. So any good man may save sinners. And so many a good man does save many sinners.

But is this all? Is there no other distinction in favor of Christ than that of a higher moral influence practically operative upon men? Is this all that the typical services mean? all that the promises and prophecies of a coming Messiah signify? all the meaning of the angels in the joyful announcement of the blessed advent? all that Christ meant in the deeper utterances of his saving work? all that the apostles have written in the gospels and epistles? all that they accepted in faith and heralded in preaching? all that the faith of the living Church rightfully embraces? all the hope of a consciously sinful and helpless humanity leaning upon Christ for help? all the meaning and joy of the saints in the presence of the Lamb slain, as there in grateful love and gladsome song they ascribe their salvation to his blood? No, no; this is not all. There is infinitely more in the saving work of Christ. He saves us in a unique mode—one in which no other does or can; saves us through an atonement in his blood. By this fact is the moral theory refuted.

4. *Not a Theory of Atonement.*—There is here no issue. The facts which we have in the refutation of this theory deny to it all rightful position as a theory of atonement. It will neither interpret the Scriptures which reveal the atonement, nor answer to the real necessity for one. It will not admit any proper definition of an atonement. It is in fact set forth and maintained in the denial of one. So, by the decision of all vitally related facts, and by the position of its advocates, the moral scheme is not a theory of atonement.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THEORY OF SATISFACTION.

A CAREFUL discrimination of leading theories on any great question of theology is helpful to its clearer apprehension and to more definite doctrinal views. But such discrimination requires a careful study of the theories severally. We propose, therefore, to give special attention to the theory of satisfaction; and the more as the real issue respecting the nature of the atonement is between it and the governmental theory, rightly constructed.<sup>1</sup>

## I. PRELIMINARIES.

1. *Position in Doctrinal Faith.*—The theory of satisfaction holds a prominent place in theology. Its advocates freely call it the catholic doctrine. The history of doctrines certainly records a very large dissent. Yet as the doctrine of the Calvinistic system its prominence must be conceded. But even here it is only the leading view. Many Calvinists dissent; and the number is growing. It is difficult, in the face of Scripture and an infinite redeeming love, to maintain the position of a limited atonement; with many, impossible. But this once surrendered and a general one maintained, consistency requires another doctrine of atonement. Here is one law of a large and growing dissent of Calvinists from the doctrine of satisfaction.

2. *Formation of the Doctrine.*—The doctrine is not from the beginning. With others, it has its place in the history of doctrinal construction. Nor did it reach completeness at once. It went through a long discussion, and appeared in different phases. The principle of penal substitution was settled first, though the exact nature of it is scarcely settled yet. But this was found to be insufficient for the Reformed system. An absolute personal election to eternal life requires a “finished salvation” in Christ. And the necessity for a substitute in penalty is easily interpreted to imply

<sup>1</sup> The term satisfaction is usually conceded to the Calvinistic doctrine; not, however, as an exclusive right, but on the ground of an early appropriation, and in view of the absolute form of the satisfaction maintained. Our own doctrine is one of satisfaction, and none the less really such because the nature of the satisfaction differs from that maintained in the Calvinistic doctrine.

the necessity for a substitute in obedience. The law is no more absolute in the demand for punishment than in the requirement of obedience. Any principles which could admit substitution in the former could equally admit it in the latter. And in this system Christ must take the place of the elect under the law in both facts. He must answer for their sin in a vicarious punishment, and for their duty of personal righteousness in a vicarious obedience.

Thus the doctrine of satisfaction found its place and full expression in the "Federal Theology," the logical outcome of the Reformed system. "Christ's atonement was thus the fulfillment of the federal conditions. The Father, who in every part of this great transaction was at once the Lawgiver and the Fountain of the covenant, insisted on the full performance of the law, and yet provided the surety, who was made under the law in the proper sense of the term. It was a true command on God's side, and a true obedience on Christ's side. He stood in our covenant, which was the law of works; that is, the law in its precepts and in its curse."<sup>1</sup>

The atonement of satisfaction is often called the Anselmic, and is traced to the scheme of Anselm as its original. We have previously noted the insufficiency of his scheme as a scientific basis for this doctrine; and we have a more rational account of its genesis and growth as the logical requirement and product of the Calvinistic system.

3. *Two Factors of the Atonement.*—Thus in the completed doctrine there are two elements or factors—substituted punishment and substituted obedience. Nothing less, it is claimed, could satisfy the absolute requirement of justice and law. Sin must be punished; but its punishment neither supersedes nor satisfies the requirement of perfect obedience. The elect have failed in this obedience, and never can fulfill its obligation by their own personal conduct. Hence they need a substitute in obedience as much as in penalty. Christ answers for them in both.

Such is the atonement of satisfaction. Christ takes the place of the elect, in both penalty and precept, and, as their substitute, endures the punishment which, on account of sin, they deserve, and in his obedience fulfills the righteousness required of them. Thus justice and law are satisfied.<sup>2</sup> The vicarious punishment discharges the elect from amenability to penalty on account of sin, and his vicarious obedience renders them deservedly

<sup>1</sup> Smeaton: *The Apostles' Doctrine of Atonement*, p. 540.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan: *The Doctrine of Justification*, p. 308; A. A. Hodge: *The Atonement*, chap. xviii; Shedd: *The History of Christian Doctrine*, vol. ii, p. 341.

rewardable with the eternal blessedness to which they are predestinated. "The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he, through the eternal Spirit, once offered unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for all those whom the Father had given unto him."<sup>1</sup>

4. *Concerned with the Penal Substitution.*—In the review of this theory we shall limit the treatment to the one element of satisfaction by penal substitution. The other element properly belongs to the question of justification. It really belongs to this question in the Calvinistic system, though treated as a constituent fact of the atonement itself. It is held to answer to an absolute requirement of the divine law as really as the substituted punishment, and, by imputation to the elect, constitutes in them the ground of a strictly forensic justification. This is a justification by works, not in forgiveness. "If Christ fulfilled the law for us, and presents his righteousness to its demands as the basis of our justification, then are we justified by the deeds of the law, no less than if it were our own personal obedience and righteousness by which we are justified."<sup>2</sup> But in any view of the question, satisfaction by obedience respects a different claim and office of justice from satisfaction by punishment. And whatsoever reason satisfactionists may have, as arising from their own soteriology, for the inclusion of both elements in the treatment of atonement, we have no reason for the same method in our review. In this restricted treatment we have the precedence of a master in the soteriology of satisfaction: "By the way, observe I speak only of the penalty of the law, and the passive righteousness of Christ, strictly so called. . . . What place that active righteousness of Christ hath, or what is its use in our justification, I do not now inquire, being unwilling to inmix myself unnecessarily in any controversy."<sup>3</sup>

## II. ELEMENTS OF THE THEORY.

Most of the elements of this theory have already appeared; yet it is proper that they here be stated distinctly and in order.

1. *Satisfaction of Justice in Punishment.*—The satisfaction of justice in its punitive demand is a cardinal fact of the theory. Indeed, it is so essential that such satisfaction must enter into the

<sup>1</sup> *Westminster Confession*, chap. viii, v.

<sup>2</sup> Curry: "Justification by Faith," *Methodist Quarterly Review*, January, 1845, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Owen: *Works* (Goold's), vol. x, p. 442.

very nature of the atonement. Both a moral influence with men and an important rectoral office are admitted, but only as incidental. Not even the latter is essential; nor has it any place in the foundation of the doctrine. But the satisfaction of divine justice in the definite sense of the doctrine—satisfaction in the punishment of sin according to its demerit, and solely for that reason—is essential. It is not omitted in the case of the redeemed and saved, nor can it be. The atonement is in a mode to render the satisfaction required. Indeed, such satisfaction is the atonement as it respects the claim of retributive justice against the demerit of sin.

2. *Through Penal Substitution.*—In this doctrine the satisfaction is by substitutional punishment. The absolute necessity for the satisfaction renders this the only possible mode of redemption. Hence, as maintained, Christ takes the law-place of elect sinners, and suffers in their stead the penalty due to their sins, or such a penalty as satisfies the punitive demand of justice against them.

3. *Three Forms of the Substitution.*—On the nature of the penal substitution, or in what sense Christ suffered the penalty of sin, advocates of the doctrine have not been of one mind. Indeed, it has been with them a question of diverse views and of no little controversy. The history of the question gives us three forms of opinion.

One view is that of identical penalty; but it has such palpable difficulty that of course the thinkers of a great Christian communion could not agree in it. Yet it has its place in the history of Calvinistic soteriology; and, though now generally discarded, it is still thought worthy of the attention and adverse criticism of the Calvinistic authors holding a different view. Once great divines were among its advocates; for instance, John Owen.<sup>1</sup> And he had a following, and such that it is common to speak of his school.

It is needless to array the many difficulties of such a view. An identical punishment by substitution is in any case psychologically impossible. What, then, must be the fact with such a substitute as Christ? Punishment is suffered in the consciousness of the subject. Its nature, therefore, must be largely determined by his own personal character in relation to sin and penalty. It is hence impossible that Christ should suffer in substitution as the actual sinner deserves to suffer, and would suffer in his own punishment. Nor

<sup>1</sup> That which I maintain as to this point in difference I have also made apparent. It is wholly comprised under these two heads—first, Christ suffered the same penalty which was in the obligation; secondly, to do so is to make payment *ejusdem*, and not *tantidem*.—*Works* (Goold's), vol. x, p. 448.

can such a principle render any explanation of the difference between the redemptive sufferings of Christ as only temporary, and the merited punishment of sinners as eternal. Words are easily uttered. Therefore it is easy to attempt a solution of the difficulty by saying that the sufferings of Christ fulfilled the legal requirements of eternal punishment, because, while temporal in fact, they were *potentially* or *intensively* eternal. But such terms have no meaning in such a use.

Christ endured penal sufferings equal in amount to the merited penal sufferings of all the sinners redeemed. This view, IN EQUAL PEN- also, has its place in historic Calvinism, and a broader ALTY. one than that of identical penalty. It is now generally discarded. Yet its present disrepute is not properly from any fundamental principle. If possible and necessary, it would be permissible on the very principle of penal substitution. It is rejected as impossible, or certainly not actual, because rendered unnecessary to a sufficient atonement by the superior rank of Christ as substitute in penalty. Strange that it ever should have found favor or friend. It needs no refutation. And all friends of great doctrinal truth should be glad that now it is generally discarded.

Another view is that of equivalent penalty. The sense is, that the penal sufferings of Christ, while far less in quantity IN EQUIVALENT than the merited penal sufferings of the sinners re- PENALTY. deemed, were yet, in quantity and quality combined, of equal value for the satisfaction of justice, and, therefore, an equivalent substitute in the case. The higher supplementary quality lies in the superior rank of Christ as substitute in penalty. It is as the payment of gold in the place of silver. The claim is satisfied with a reduction of quantity in proportion to the higher quality of the substitute.<sup>1</sup> This is now the common form of penal substitution as held in the doctrine of satisfaction. But justice must have penal satisfaction, either in the full punishment of the actual offender or in an equivalent punishment of his substitute.

4. *An Absolute Substitution.*—Atonement by substitution is not a distinctive fact of the theory of satisfaction. The rectoral theory holds the same fact fully and firmly. Nor is an atonement by penal substitution a distinctive fact of that doctrine. Many hold such a penal substitution as, in their view, constitutes a really conditional ground of forgiveness. In this scheme the redemptive sufferings of Christ were, in some sense not exactly defined, the punishment of sin; but not such a punishment that the redeemed sinner must in very justice be discharged. We have previously stated the inconsistency

<sup>1</sup> Shedd: *Theological Essays*, pp. 300, 301.

of the position. Penal substitution and a real conditionality of forgiveness must refuse scientific fellowship. We accept, therefore, the view of Dr. A. A. Hodge, that it is "by a happy sacrifice of logic" that Arminius himself, and some of his leading followers, are with the Calvinists on penal substitution;<sup>1</sup> only we reject the epithet qualifying the sacrifice. We do not think it a *happy* sacrifice of logic on the part of an Arminian, whereby he mistakes the true nature of the atonement, and at the same time admits a principle which requires him, in consistency, to accept along with it the purely distinctive doctrines of Calvinism. But whatever the sacrifice of logic in the case, the fact of such a theory remains the same. And this fact denies to the doctrine of satisfaction the distinctive fact of penal substitution.

It hence follows that the distinctive fact of the satisfaction THE DISTINCTIVE FACT. ory is an absolute penal substitution; absolute in the sense of a real and sufficient punishment of sin in Christ as substitute in penalty; and also in the sense of an unconditional discharge of all for whom he is such a substitute. Such a discharge follows necessarily from the very nature of the substitution alleged, and in the averment of the very masters in the soteriology of satisfaction. This will appear in its place.

### III. JUSTICE AND ATONEMENT.

1. *Their Intimate Relation.*—Were there no justice there could be no sin in any strictly forensic sense. There could be neither guilt nor punishment. The judicial treatment of sin is from its relation to justice and law. It can neither be judicially condemned nor forgiven, except in such relation. Hence, as the atonement is the ground of the divine forgiveness, there must be a most intimate relation between it and justice. And for a true doctrine of atonement we require a true doctrine of justice.

It follows that in any scientific treatment the theory of atonement must accord with the doctrine of justice upon which it is constructed. The atonement of satisfaction is exceptionally rigid in its conformity to this law. The same law is observed in the rectoral atonement; yet here its relation to justice has not been as fully and exactly treated as it should be, and as it must be in order to a right construction and exposition of the doctrine. These facts require some specific statements respecting justice which may be appropriate here, though the fuller treatment will be in connection with the principles specially concerned in the question, as we find them in the satisfaction and rectoral theories.

<sup>1</sup> *The Atonement.* p. 14.



2. *Distinctions of Justice.*—Technically, justice is of several kinds; but, strictly, such distinctions are from its different relations and offices rather than intrinsic to itself.

Commutative justice has a commercial sense, and is specially concerned with business transactions. The rendering or requiring an exact due or equivalent, and whether in money or other commodity, is commutative justice. It has no admitted place in the atonement, except in the now generally discarded sense of identical or equal penalty. Whether that of equivalent penalty is logically clear of the principle we may yet inquire.

Distributive justice is justice in a moral and judicial sense. It regards men as under moral obligation and law; as obedient or disobedient; as morally good or evil in their personal character; and is the rendering to them reward or punishment according to their personal conduct. Some divide it into premial and punitive; but the sense is not thereby changed.

Public justice, in its relation to moral government, is not a distinct kind, but simply divine justice in moral administration. It is really one with distributive justice, properly interpreted. We do not accept the interpretation of satisfactionists. On the other hand, advocates of the rectoral atonement have unduly lowered the truth of public justice. On a right exposition of each, the two are one. But we shall find a more appropriate place for the treatment of public justice when discussing the governmental atonement.<sup>1</sup>

3. *Punitive Justice and Satisfaction.*—Punitive justice is justice in the punishment of sin, or the office of which is to punish sin. And punitive, as a qualifying term, best expresses that principle of justice which the theory under review claims to have been satisfied by the penal substitution of Christ.

Remunerative justice has respect to obedience and its reward. The law, as its expression, requires perfect obedience as the ground of the reward. And, on the theory of satisfaction, Christ by his personal obedience meritoriously fulfilled the law in behalf of the elect. But his righteousness so represented as an element of atonement in the satisfaction of justice respects an essentially different principle from that concerned in his penal substitution, and, as before noted, has no proper place in the present discussion.

Then the essential fact of punitive justice is, that it punishes sin according to its demerit, and on that ground; and must none the

<sup>1</sup> Wardlaw: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 368-372; Owen: *A Dissertation on Divine Justice*, part i, Works (Goold's), vol. x.

less so punish it in the total absence of every other reason or end. Such is the justice which the theory under review claims to have been satisfied by the penal substitution of Christ.

#### IV. PRINCIPLES OF THE THEORY.

The theory of satisfaction necessarily posits certain principles as underlying the doctrine of atonement which it maintains. They must constitute the very basis of the doctrine. Yet for the present they require but a brief statement.

1. *The Demerit of Sin.*—Sin has intrinsic demerit. It deserves the retribution of divine justice on account of its intrinsic evil, and entirely irrespective of all salutary results of its punishment.

We accept this principle, and in the fullest persuasion of its truth. It is a truth in fullest accord with the Holy Scriptures.

THEIR ANNOUNCED PENALTIES REPRESENT THIS DEMERIT. SUCH ACCEPTED. penalties have no other ground in justice. And our moral consciousness, especially under divine enlightenment and quickening, responds to the voice of Scripture. But the punitive demerit of sin, so given and affirmed, is in no discord with our own doctrine of atonement.

2. *A Divine Punitive Justice.*—There is a punitive justice in God. And it is a fact of his very nature, as specific and real as any other fact. It is no mere phase of his benevolence, nor simply a reaction of his pity for one wronged, against the author of his wrong. God, in his very justice, condemns sin as such. Nor is such condemnation a mere judgment of its discordance with his own uttered precepts, or with some ideal or impersonal law, or with the welfare of others, but the profoundest emotional reprobation of it because of its inherent evil.

SO WE MAINTAIN. HENCE WE REJECT THE VIEW OF LEIBNITZ, AND OF all agreeing with him, “that justice is a modification of benevolence;”<sup>1</sup> a view that has received too much favor from advocates of the rectoral atonement. Whether the love of God is his supreme law in moral administration is really another question, and one not negated by the truth of his justice. But our own moral nature, as divinely constituted, joins with the Holy Scriptures in attesting the truth of such a divine justice. Our moral reason distinguishes between the turpitude of a sinful deed and the injury which it may inflict. A like injury, innocently done, awakens no such reprobation. We reprobate the intention of injury where the doing is hindered. Thus our moral reason witnesses for a divine justice. Such justice, in its deepest, divinest

<sup>1</sup>Gilbert : *The Christian Atonement*, p. 185.

form, condemns sin as such, and is a disposition to punish it. We maintain this view.

3. *Sin Ought to be Punished.*—This proposition is freely affirmed, but with little regard to its proper analysis, and, therefore, with little apprehension of its meaning. A sinner may say, and with all sincerity, that he ought to be punished; but all he means is, that he deserves to be punished. He has in mind and conscience his own demerit, and not the obligation of another respecting him. Often the term is used respecting sin in the same sense—that it deserves to be punished; but this adds nothing to what we already have. The proposition is identical in meaning with a former one, which affirms the punitive desert of sin.

But the term *ought*, as used in the theory of satisfaction, must have a ground in obligation, and that obligation must lie upon God as moral Ruler. Such is the requirement of the theory. If sin ought to be punished, God is under obligation to punish it. Such is the inevitable logic of the proposition. This carries satisfactionists into a very high position, and one very difficult to hold, but which they must hold or suffer a destructive breach in their line of necessary principles. For such divine obligation, whether understood as included in the meaning of the proposition or not, is a logical implication and necessity of the scheme. And this obligation must be maintained simply on the ground of demerit in sin, and apart from all the interests of moral government.

4. *Penal Satisfaction a Necessity of Justice.*—Sin must be punished. It must be punished on its own account, and none the less in the total absence of all salutary influence of punishment, whether upon the sinner himself or upon the public virtue and welfare. It is a necessity of judicial rectitude in God. Divine justice must have penal satisfaction. This principle is really one with that immediately preceding. It is the last that we need name. And here we part with the theory of satisfaction. We do not admit this principle. We reject it, not only as without evidence of its truth, but also because of evidence to the contrary.

The irremissibility of penalty is the determining principle of the theory of satisfaction. Merited penalty is absolutely irremissible on any and all grounds whatsoever. The scheme allows a substitute in place of the offender; but such an exchange of subjects in punishment is no omission of penalty. The offender is discharged, but his substitute suffers the deserved penalty in his stead; or suffers, at least, its penal equivalent with the divine law. This, indeed, is the very averment of the doctrine.

Nor is there any omission of punishment in an exchange of measure which justice permits in view of the higher rank of the substitute. In any and every way there is, and there must be, the infliction of deserved penalty. The sinner or his substitute must be punished according to the demerit of the sin. This is the necessity for an atonement in the scheme of satisfaction. Hence the absolute irremissibility of penalty determines the atonement to be by penal substitution. There is no other possible atonement. We know and welcome the account made of the rank and worth of Christ as penal substitute; an account logically valueless and unnecessary with the forms of identical and equal penalty, but consistent with that of equivalent penalty. But even here they are of account only as they give punitive value to his atoning sufferings; so that, as before noted, justice is satisfied with a less quantity in proportion to the higher quality. Still it is only penal suffering that counts in this element of atonement. And the very substance of such an atonement is substituted punishment in satisfaction of an absolute punitive justice.

#### V. THE SATISFACTION IMPOSSIBLE BY SUBSTITUTION.

If sin must be punished in the measure of its desert, penal substitution is the only conceivable mode of atonement. But such an atonement is possible only as the substitution may fulfill the absolute obligation of justice in the punishment of sin. The requirement is a crucial test of the theory. There is much perplexity in its treatment. The vacillations of opinion and diversities of view clearly show this perplexity.<sup>1</sup>

The effect of the imputation of sin to Christ, and the nature and degree of his penal sufferings, are questions entering deeply into the difficulties of the subject. Did imputation carry over sin, with its turpitude and demerit, or only its guilt, to him? Did he suffer, instead of the elect, the same punishment which, otherwise, they must have suffered? Did he endure penal suffering equal in amount, though differing in kind, to the merited punishment of the redeemed? Did he suffer an equivalent punishment, less in amount but of higher value, and thus a penal equivalent with justice? Did he suffer the torment of the finally lost? Was his punishment potentially or intensively eternal? Such questions have been asked and answered affirmatively; though a negative is now mostly given to those of more extreme import. The boldness of earlier expositors is mainly avoided in the caution of

<sup>1</sup> Bruce: *The Humiliation of Christ*, pp. 436-447; *Methodist Quarterly Review*, July, 1846.

the later. The former are more extravagant, the latter less consistent. But the theory, in every phase of it, asserts the just punishment of sin in Christ; and, therefore, asserts or implies all that is requisite to such punishment. A denial of any such requisite is suicidal.

In denying the possible satisfaction of a purely retributive justice by a substitute in penalty we are content to make the issue with the more moderate and carefully guarded position of satisfactionists. This is but polemical fairness, as such is now the more common position.

1. *The Satisfaction Necessary.*—The necessary satisfaction of justice, as maintained in this theory, respects not merely a punitive disposition in God, but specially and chiefly an obligation of his justice to punish sin according to its demerit, and on that ground. It is because the punishment of sin is a necessity in the rectitude of divine justice that the only possible atonement is by penal substitution.

This position is so important in the present question that we should have the views of leading satisfactionists respecting it. “The law of God, which includes a penalty as well as precepts, is in both a revelation of the nature of God. If the precepts manifest his holiness, the penalty as clearly manifests his justice. If the one is immutable, so also is the other. The wages of sin is death. Death is what is due to it in justice, and what, without injustice, cannot be withheld from it.”<sup>1</sup> “Justice is a form of moral excellence. It belongs to the nature of God. It demands the punishment of sin. If sin be pardoned, it can be pardoned in consistency with the divine justice only on the ground of a forensic penal satisfaction.”<sup>2</sup> “The Scriptures, however, assume that if a man sins he must die. On this assumption all their representations and arguments are founded. Hence the plan of salvation which the Bible reveals supposes that the justice of God, which renders the punishment of sin necessary, has been satisfied.”<sup>3</sup> The position maintained in these citations is clearly given, and fully agrees with our statement. From the nature of justice the punishment of sin is necessary. The obligation is such that any omission of punishment would be an act of injustice. Thus, from the very nature of divine justice, the necessary punishment of sin is deduced as a consequence. It is as essential and immutable in God as any other attribute; therefore he must punish sin according to its desert, and on that ground. Thus his justice binds him to the

<sup>1</sup> Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, vol. i, p. 423.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 488.      <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 492.

infliction of merited punishment upon sin, just as other moral perfections bind him to holiness, goodness, truth.

We may give other authorities. “But again, concerning this justice, another question arises, Whether it be natural to God, or an *essential attribute of the divine nature*—that is to say, such that the existence of sin being admitted, God must necessarily exercise it, because it supposes in him a constant and immutable will to punish sin, so that while he acts consistently with his nature he cannot do otherwise than punish and avenge it—or whether it be a free act of the divine will, which he may exercise at pleasure?”<sup>1</sup> This is submitted as a question. There are really two questions; but we are concerned simply with the fact that Owen maintains the position of the former; and we are now concerned with this only in its relation to penal substitution. It asserts a necessity in the very nature of God for the punishment of sin simply as such; a necessity, not from the domination of a punitive disposition, but from the requirement of judicial rectitude. “God is determined, by the immutable holiness of his nature, to punish all sin because of its intrinsic guilt or demerit; the effect produced on the moral universe being incidental as an end.”<sup>2</sup> “Law has no option. Justice has but one function. . . . The law itself is under law; that is, it is under the necessity of its own nature; and, therefore, the only possible way whereby a transgressor can escape the penalty of law is for a substitute to endure it for him.”<sup>3</sup> Here, again, we have the same doctrine of an immutable obligation of divine justice to punish sin, and none the less in the absence of every other reason than its own demerit. We here make no issue with the doctrine, but, as before noted, give it prominence on account of its vital logical connection with the doctrine of penal substitution.

2. *The Substitution Maintained.*—There is also a vital logical connection between the imputation of sin to Christ and his penal substitution in atonement. In any proper treatment of the question the two facts must be in scientific accordance. And we have, with the carefully guarded doctrine of substitution, an equally cautious exposition of the imputation of sin to Christ. In such exposition sin is treated analytically, not as a concrete whole. This is necessary to the moderation of the theory maintained. For to treat sin as a whole, and to allege its imputation to Christ and just punishment in him, is to involve the facts of the more extravagant theory. Guilt is distinguished from the attributes of turpitude,

<sup>1</sup> Owen: Works (Goold's), vol. x, p. 505.

<sup>2</sup> A. A. Hodge: *The Atonement*, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> Shedd: *Theological Essays*, p. 287.

criminality, demerit, and claimed to be separable from sin in the deeper sense, both in thought and fact. It is freely admitted that the transference and substitutional punishment of sin in the former sense is an impossibility; but it is fully claimed that guilt—the amenability of sin to the penalty of justice—could be transferred to Christ and justly punished in him.

We shall give this view from Dr. Charles Hodge. It has no better authority. “By guilt, many insist on meaning DEMERIT PURELY PERSONAL. personal criminality and ill desert; and by punishment, evil inflicted on the ground of such personal demerit. In these senses of the words the doctrine of satisfaction and vicarious punishment would, indeed, involve an impossibility. . . . And if punishment means evil inflicted on the ground of personal demerit, then it is a contradiction to say that the innocent can be punished. But if guilt expresses only the relation of sin to justice, and is the obligation under which the sinner is placed to satisfy its demands, then there is nothing . . . which forbids the idea that this obligation may, on adequate grounds, be transferred from one to another, or assumed by one in the place of others.”<sup>1</sup> The omissions cannot in the least affect the sense of the author. Leading facts are clearly given in the passage cited. One is, that moral character is absolutely untransferable; another, that if punishment is a judicial infliction upon the ground of personal demerit, the satisfaction of justice by penal substitution is impossible. Hence the distinction of sin into personal demerit and guilt, and the assumption that the latter, as the legal amenability of sin, could be transferred to Christ, and punished in him in fulfillment of the punitive obligation of justice.

3. *No Answer to the Necessity.*—We now have the facts respecting the alleged necessity for the punishment of sin, and also the facts of penal substitution as meeting that necessity. Do the latter answer to the requirements of the former? Does the penal substitution maintained fulfill the alleged absolute obligation of justice to punish sin according to its demerit? There is no such answer or fulfillment. So we affirm, and proceed to the proof.

The analytic treatment of sin is entirely proper if it be remembered that such treatment is in thought only. And we may distinguish between the demerit and the guilt of sin, using the former term in the sense of its intrinsic evil, and the latter in the sense of its amenability to retributive justice. In the former sense, we have sin in the violation of obligation; in the latter, under judicial treatment. Is such distinction a sufficient ground for the more

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 532.

moderate theory of substitutional punishment constructed upon it? If so sufficient, will such substitution answer to the absolute necessity for the punishment of sin which the theory asserts?

It should here be specially noted that the principles of the theory are not even modified, much less surrendered. They are still asserted and held in all their integrity and strength as the very necessity for an atonement, and as determinative of its nature in the substitutional punishment of sin. We have previously seen what these principles are. And they are inseparable from the doctrine of satisfaction. We have also given citations from leading authors in the unqualified assertion of an absolute necessity for the punishment for sin. Advocates of the more moderate theory of imputation and penal substitution are no exception. All agree in the obligation of divine justice to punish sin according to its demerit, and on that ground. But it is denied that the turpitude and demerit of sin can be transferred to Christ. All that is claimed, or even admitted to be so transferred, is the guilt of sin; guilt as an amenability to the retribution of justice. Is such a substitution the merited punishment of sin?

Nothing could be punished in Christ which was not transferred to him, and in some real sense made his. This is self-evident. Hence, if sin, with its demerit, could not, as now admitted, be put upon Christ by imputation, no punishment which he suffered fell upon such demerit, or intrinsic evil of sin. And we think it impossible to show how sin is punished according to its demerit, and on that ground, in the total absence of such demerit from the substitute in punishment. With the admission of the theory, its only resource is in guilt as a distinct fact of sin. If guilt, as the amenability of sin to the penalty of justice, is separable from sin, and as a distinct fact transferable to Christ, and if his punishment, as so constituted guilty, is the punishment of sin according to its demerit and on that ground, then the penal substitution maintained answers to the asserted absolute necessity for the punishment of sin. If any one of these suppositions fails the theory, then the theory itself inevitably fails.

Guilt, as distinctively treated in this theory, arises in the relation of sin to divine justice, and as an obligation of sin to suffer the merited penalty of justice. It is so defined and discriminated from the turpitude of sin in the carefully exact statement recently cited from Dr. Charles Hodge. He makes the same distinction elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> But guilt, considered as apart from sin, exists only in conception, not in objective reality. It may be

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 189.



said that it becomes a concrete fact in Christ by imputation to him. Then the result is a guilty Christ. But guilty of what? Not of sin, for that is not transferred to him, nor in any proper sense made his. Guilty of guilt, we may suppose. For as guilt is the only thing imputed, and the imputation makes him guilty, we find no better expression of the fact in the case. There seems a harshness even in such an expression; yet it is mollified, by the fact that at most Christ is guilty of only a conceptual guilt.

But the original difficulty remains. Guilt, apart from sin, is still guilt in the abstract, and exists only in conception, as much so as roundness, concavity, redness. And how could such a conceptual guilt render Christ guilty, or constitute in him a just ground of punishment? It were as easy to transform a cube into a globe by imputing sphericity to it. But is not guilt a reality? Certainly, and a terrible one; but only as a concrete fact of sin. And with the imputation of such an abstract guilt to Christ, while sin, with its turpitude and demerit, with all that is punishable and all that deserves to be punished left behind, how can the redemptive suffering which he endured be the merited punishment of sin?

4. *No such Answer Possible.*—Guilt cannot exist apart from sin. It is impossible by the very definition of it as the obligation of sin to the retribution of justice. The necessary conjunction of facts is obvious. On the one side is justice, with its precept and penalty; on the other, sin; hence, guilt. There is guilt, because justice asserts a penal claim upon sin. The demerit of sin, the intrinsic evil of sin, is the only ground of such a claim. Nothing but sin can be guilty, or render any one guilty. And there can no more be guilt apart from sin than there can be extension without either substance or space. It is not in itself punishable, but simply the punitive amenability of sin to justice. It cannot, therefore, be so put upon Christ as to render him punishable, unless the very sin is put upon him. But this is conceded to be impossible.

Indeed, sin itself is a punishable reality only as a personal fact. In the last analysis only a person, only a sinful person, SIN AS PUNISHABLE. is punishable. It is not any impersonal sin, or sin in generalized conception, but only a sinful person, that is answerable to justice in penalty. Sin has no real existence apart from the agent in the sinning. The guilt of sin lies upon him, and can no more be put upon a substitute as a punitive desert than his sinful act can cease to be his and be made the sinful act of such substitute.

But the principles of the satisfaction scheme still remain, with the necessity for the punishment of sin according to its demerit,

and on that ground. So imperative is this obligation, that any omission of such punishment would be an injustice in God. With this the very masters in the theory fully agree. Indeed, there is no dissent. Is sin so punished in Christ? It is not, even if we admit the separability of guilt and its transference to Christ. Guilt is not sin. The theory itself carefully discriminates the two. Such is its necessity, as it denies the transferability of sin. For, otherwise, it has nothing which it may even claim to be transferred as the ground of merited punishment. By the alleged facts of the theory no penalty is inflicted upon sin. Yet its punishment is the asserted absolute requirement of moral rectitude in divine justice. The conclusion is most certain that the penal substitution which the theory of satisfaction holds can give no answer to the necessity for the punishment of sin which it asserts.

5. *The Theory Self-destructive.*—The necessary punishment of sin and the nature of penal substitution, which the theory maintains and seeks to combine in the doctrine of satisfaction, absolutely refuse all scientific fellowship. Yet the theory can neither dispense with the one nor so modify the other as to agree with it. The former is its very ground-principle, and therefore cannot be dispensed with. The necessary modification of the latter, in order to a scientific agreement with the former, would require a transference of the turpitude and demerit of sin to Christ; therefore, such modification must be rejected. Consequently, whether there be or be not an absolute necessity for the punishment of sin, the theory of satisfaction is self-destructive. For, with such a necessity, not only does the penal substitution maintained utterly fail to answer to its imperative requirement, but no possible substitution can so answer. But without such a necessity for the punishment of sin the theory is utterly groundless. Therefore, whether there be or be not the asserted necessity for the punishment of sin, the theory is self-destroyed.

## VI. FACTS OF THE THEORY IN OBJECTION.

Much has been anticipated which might have been arranged under objections. Yet much remains, but requiring only a brief treatment in view of previous discussions.

1. *The Punishment of Christ.*—It is a weighty objection to the theory under review that it makes the punishment of Christ necessary to atonement. The punishment is in satisfaction of justice. Its desert in him is imputed sin. Justice must punish sin: therefore it must punish sin in Christ as a substitute in atonement. There is no other possible atonement.

But the imputation of sin has insuperable difficulties. This is especially true of its imputation to Christ. Such is the confession in the caution which discriminates between sin and guilt, and admits only the latter in imputation. It shocks our moral reason to think of Christ as a sinner even by imputation. Yet such imputation is a nullity for all purposes of this theory, unless it makes our sins in some real sense his. For otherwise there can be no pretense even of their merited punishment in him. If the imputation of sin is in order to its just punishment, and sufficient for that end, really the view of Luther is none too strong: "For Christ is innocent as concerning his own person, and therefore he ought not to have been hanged upon a tree; but because, according to the law of Moses, every thief and malefactor ought to be hanged, therefore Christ also, according to the law, ought to be hanged; for he sustained the person of a sinner and of a thief—not of one, but of all sinners and thieves."<sup>1</sup> There is much more such, and some even worse. Others maintain a like position, if not with the same boldness of utterance. It is only through such an imputation that justice could fulfill, by substitution, its asserted absolute obligation to punish sin according to its demerit.

Such implication is not avoided by the assumption of an imputation merely of guilt. It is still the guilt of sin, and renders Christ guilty in a sense that he may be justly punished. Nor are we confounding the discriminated *reatus culpæ* and *reatus pænæ* of theologians; though the distinction is useless for the purpose of finding a guilt that may exist and be punished apart from sin, and especially with the notion that sin is thereby punished. The guilt which answers to justice in penalty is the guilt of sin. If Christ so answered as a substitute for the elect, he must have been guilty of all their sins. Hence the theory under review should neither discard the bold utterances of Luther nor seek shelter under an utterly futile distinction between sin and guilt. On any consistent supposition it must hold Christ as guilty of all the sins which suffered their merited punishment in him. But he never could be so guilty: hence the doctrine of atonement which implies and requires such a fact cannot be the true doctrine.

2. *Redeemed Sinners Without Guilt.*—The atonement of satisfaction has this logical implication, that all for whom it is made are without guilt. Such an atonement is, by its very nature, a discharge from all amenability to the penalty of justice. Explicit statements of its leading advocates are in full accord with this position. Nor has such a consequence any avoidance by any real dis-

<sup>1</sup> *Commentary on Galatians*, chap. iii, 13.

inction between *meritum culpæ* and *meritum pænæ*. In any reality of such distinction there may be personal demerit without legal guilt; though we have denied, and do deny, to the theory under review, the truth of the converse, that there may be such guilt without such demerit. But here we raise no question whether sinners, simply as redeemed, are still in a state of personal demerit. Our position respects guilt as the amenability of sin to the penalties of justice, and asserts that, according to the atonement of satisfaction, the elect for whom it is made are, in their whole life, and however wicked, entirely free from such guilt. There is for them neither judicial condemnation nor liability to punishment. The penalties of justice, impending in the divine threatenings, have no imminence for them.

The scheme ever asserts an absolute necessity for the punishment of sin. It equally asserts such a penal substitution of Christ in the place of the elect as fully satisfies the penal claim of justice against them. Thus justice fulfilled its own retributive obligation in the punishment of sin, just as though it had inflicted the merited penalty upon them. God has accepted the penal substitution for their own punishment. All is in strict accord with a covenant agreement between the Father and the Son, as the theory asserts. Now such an atonement, by its very nature, cancels all punitive claim against the elect, and by immediate result forever frees them from all guilt as a liability to the penalty of sin. We know that such a consequence is denied, though we shall show that it is also fully asserted.

It is attempted to obviate this consequence by a distinction between a pecuniary and a penal obligation: "Another important difference between pecuniary and penal satisfaction is that the one *ipso facto* liberates. The moment the debt is paid the debtor is free, and that completely. No delay can be admitted, and no conditions can be attached to his deliverance. But in the case of a criminal, as he has no claim to have a substitute take his place, if one be provided, the terms on which the benefits of his substitution shall accrue to the principal are matters of agreement or covenant between the substitute and the magistrate who represents justice."<sup>1</sup> Such a distinction will not accord with the penal substitution of Christ. The ground-principle of the doctrine is, that sin must be punished according to its demerit, and on that ground; must be, because of an immutable obligation of justice so to punish it. Then by the penal substitution of Christ sin is so punished in him, and the obligation of justice fulfilled.

<sup>1</sup>Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 470, 471.

Such are the facts of the doctrine. On the ground of such facts, a discharge must immediately follow upon such penal substitution, just as on the payment of a debt.

So Dr. Hodge gives the facts in less than two pages in advance of the previous citation. "If the claims of justice are satisfied they cannot be again enforced. This is the analogy RESULT THE SAME. between the work of Christ and the payment of a debt.

The point of agreement between the two cases is not the nature of the satisfaction rendered, but one aspect of the effect produced. In both cases the persons for whom the satisfaction is made are certainly freed. Their exemption or deliverance is in both cases, and equally in both, a matter of justice."<sup>1</sup> We shall attempt no improvement here; for we can give neither a better statement of the fact in the case nor a better reply to the citation made just before from the same author.

We may add a few authorities. "Will God punish sin twice, first in the person of the Surety, and then in the persons themselves, in whose place he stood? It will be acknowledged, without a dissenting voice, that in any other AUTHORITIES. case this would be a manifest injustice. But 'is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid: the Judge of all the earth will do right.'"<sup>2</sup> "The death of Christ being a legal satisfaction for sin, all for whom he died must enjoy the remission of their offenses. It is as much at variance with strict justice or equity that any for whom Christ has given satisfaction should continue under condemnation, as that they should have been delivered from guilt without any satisfaction being given for them at all."<sup>3</sup> A satisfactionist could hardly put the case more strongly. "For if, in consequence of his suretyship, the debt has been transferred to Christ and by him discharged, every one must see that it has been taken away from the primary debtors, so that payment cannot be demanded of them. They must forever afterward remain free, absolved from all obligation to punishment."<sup>4</sup>

Such authorities may suffice for our position. Indeed, we did not really need any, as such freedom from guilt is the inevitable consequence of an atonement by penal substitution. But such moral support should silence all cavil.

The position is sometimes taken that, in a penal satisfaction, the actual forgiveness is subject to such time and conditions as the

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 472. See also pp. 482, 487, 494.

<sup>2</sup> Dick: *Theology*, vol. ii, p. 556.

<sup>3</sup> Symington: *Atonement and Intercession*, p. 190.

<sup>4</sup> Turretin: *The Atonement of Christ*, p. 146.

sovereign authority may determine. It cannot be maintained. Otherwise, all the reasonings in the above citations, and given from the very masters in this doctrine, are fallacious. It is overthrown by the analogy of result between a pecuniary and a penal satisfaction. In the latter case, as in the former, the claim of the obligee is fully satisfied, and the discharge of the party in obligation must immediately issue. The case can admit no delay and no conditions for the discharge. And no sin of the redeemed, once justly punished in Christ as an accepted substitute, can for an instant be answerable to justice in penalty, or in any sense be liable to punishment. The redeemed are without guilt.

Is such a position in accord with the real fact in the case? Sin is sin, whenever and by whomsoever committed. As such it has legal guilt as well as personal demerit. It is under judicial condemnation, and in peril of retribution. Such facts are in full accord with a common experience of souls in coming into the spiritual life. In such an experience there is more than a deep sense of personal demerit; there is also a deep sense of peril in the apprehension of divine penalty. Many a soul just on the verge of the new life is full of trembling in this apprehension. Really, there is no cause, if the true doctrine of atonement is in the just punishment of sin by substitution. But there is cause in every such case, and for the reason of guilt and judicial condemnation. The trembling apprehension is the recognition of a terrible reality. Among the eminent for piety, and, therefore, certainly of the elect and redeemed, are some who once were very wicked. Were they then without guilt or judicial condemnation? Was there for them no imminence of penal retribution? Was it so with Paul, and Augustine, and John Newton, and many others such? If so, there was a deep deception in their profoundest religious consciousness. And such a mistake is ever arising under the immediate work of the Holy Spirit in conviction for sin. As under his revealing light and convincing power the soul awakes, it not only feels within the deep evil of sin, but ever sees without the threatening penalty of divine justice. And there is no delusion in such cases.

And what of the divine threatenings against all sin and all sinners? Have they no meaning for the redeemed? Or are they like the overtures of grace which a limited atonement freely makes to all, but with real meaning for only the elect and redeemed part? On the doctrine of satisfaction, such divine threatenings signal no imminence of divine wrath for the redeemed. And what of all the Scripture terms of forgiveness and remission of sins? Have they no meaning of an actual discharge

from guilt and penalty in the hour of an actual salvation? Or is their full meaning given simply in the declaration of a discharge long before actually achieved through penal substitution? When Jesus said, as often to one or another, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," was it no actual forgiveness then granted? Without such a forgiveness, there is no pertinence in the proof which he gave of a "power on earth to forgive sins."<sup>1</sup> A doctrine of atonement encountering such facts as we have given, and facts so decisive against it, cannot be the true doctrine.

3. *A Limited Atonement.*—The theory has this consequence, and avows it. Such an atonement is in its own nature saving. The salvation of all whom Christ represents in his mediatorial work must issue. "The advocates of a limited atonement reason from the effect to the cause."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Schaff is entirely correct in this, as might be shown by many examples. Nor is there a contrary instance. But the reasoning is logically valid for a limited atonement only on the ground that such an atonement is necessarily saving. For thus only is the fact of a limited actual salvation conclusive of a limited atonement. Hence Calvinistic divines who hold a general atonement consistently reject the doctrine of satisfaction.

But the full force of this objection to the satisfaction theory cannot be given here. It lies in the Scripture fact of universality in the atonement, which will be treated in its place. For the present we name it as fatal to the theory of satisfaction. If, in the divine destination, the atonement is really for all, as we shall prove it to be, then this theory cannot be the true one.

4. *Element of Commutative Justice.*—The theory is complicated with commutative justice. We know well the vigorous denial. But denial does not void a logical implication. Commutative justice has its principle as well as its usual commodities. In any obligation the principle claims the sum due, either in the identical thing or in its equivalent in value. One or the other it must have. It freely admits substitution. A surety or proxy may satisfy the claim as well as the debtor himself. One thing may be accepted in the stead of another, if its equivalent in value.

Such is the principle, and such are the characteristic facts, in the doctrine of satisfaction. Justice requires the punishment of sin as a rightful claim. It will accept a substitute in penalty, and also a less punishment, if of such higher quality as to be of equal value. Thus in principle and characteristic facts it is at one with commutative justice. The actual and necessary discharge of the redeemed from all amenability to the penalty of

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ix, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Schaff: *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. i, p. 521.

justice, on account of the satisfaction of its claim by penal substitute, is a legitimate consequence of the same principle. Nor is there any avoidance of such complication by an alleged difference between a pecuniary and a penal claim—one on the property of the debtor, and the other on his person. Both are personal to the debtor—one for satisfaction in his property, and the other for satisfaction in his punishment. The likeness still remains. There is a oneness of the two. The theory is seriously complicated with commutative justice.



## CHAPTER VII.

## GOVERNMENTAL THEORY.

THIS theory also has already come into view more than once. But it is proper to treat it more directly and fully as we have the other leading theories. Yet the discussion will require the less elaboration, as many of the principles and facts appertaining to the theory have been more or less considered. It mainly concerns us now to bring them together, and to set them in the order of a proper method and in the light of a more exact and definitive statement.

We have indicated our acceptance of this theory as the true theory of atonement. But we so accept it in what it really is, and not in any particular exposition of it as hitherto given. It has not always been fortunate in its exposition. It was not entirely so in the beginning. Its cardinal principles have been clearly enough given; and with these in hand, a true construction of the doctrine should follow. Such, however, has not always been the case. The treatment has often been deficient in analysis or scientific method. Alien elements have been retained; vital facts omitted or wrongly placed. We hold the doctrine as we shall construct and maintain it. As such it is the doctrine of a real and necessary atonement in Christ.

## I. PRELIMINARY FACTS.

The discussion of the nature of the atonement, as represented in the governmental theory, will run through this chapter and the next. It will also be involved in the last one—universality of the atonement. The question of its extent is more than a question of facts; it concerns the doctrine also. With this satisfactionists fully agree. And the next chapter, while given to the elements of sufficiency in the redemptive mediation of Christ, treats them in view of the principles of atonement, and thus involves its nature.

1. *Substitutional Atonement.*—The sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin by substitution, in the sense that they were intentionally endured for sinners under judicial condemnation, and for the sake of their forgiveness. They render forgiveness consistent with the divine justice, in that justice none the less fulfills its rectoral office in the interest of moral government. The honor and authority of the divine Ruler, together with the rights and interests

of his subjects, are as fully maintained as they could be by the infliction of merited penalty upon sin.

2. *Conditional Substitution.*—The forgiveness of sin has a real conditionality. The fact is given in the clearest utterances of Scripture. It is also given as the only explanation of the fact that, with a real atonement for all, some perish. An atonement for all by absolute substitution would inevitably achieve the salvation of all. Therefore a universal atonement, with the fact of a limited actual salvation, is conclusive of a real conditionality in its saving grace. It follows, inevitably, that such an atonement is provisory, not immediately and necessarily saving.

3. *Substitution in Suffering.*—The substitution of Christ must be of a nature agreeing with the provisory character of the atonement. It could not, therefore, be a substitution in penalty as the merited punishment of sin, for such an atonement is absolute. The substitution, therefore, is in suffering, without the penal element. This agrees with the nature of the atonement as a moral support of justice in its rectoral office, thus rendering forgiveness consistent with the interest of moral government.

Nor have the vicarious sufferings of Christ, without the penal element, less value for any legitimate purpose or attainable end of substitutional atonement. Such an atonement has great ends in the manifestation of the divine holiness, justice, and love; of the evil of sin, and the certainty of penalty, except as forgiveness may be obtained in the grace of redemption. But for all such ends the theory of vicarious punishment has no advantage above that of vicarious suffering.

The punishment of sin does manifest the divine holiness and justice. But this fact gives no advantage to the scheme of substitutional punishment; and for the reason that sin is not punished in Christ. If he is punished, it is in absolute freedom from all demerit of sin. And the recoil of so many minds from such a fact, as one of injustice, is not without reason.

Punishment does declare the evil of sin, but only as it falls upon the demerit of sin. But here, again, the scheme of satisfaction is denied all advantage, because, according to its own admissions, such is not the fact in the substitution of Christ. And the substitution in suffering, as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness, will answer for such declaration as fully as the alleged substitution in punishment.

A ground of forgiveness provided in a divine sacrifice infinitely great is a marvelous manifestation of the divine love; but that sacrifice, in every admissible or possible element, is as great in the mode of vicarious suffering as in that of vica-

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rious punishment. The gift of the Father is the same. Nor are the sufferings of the Son less, or other, in any possible element. In neither case could there be any remorse or sense of personal demerit. He could have no sense of the divine wrath against himself. Nor could there be such a divine wrath. The doctrine of satisfaction will so deny. It would repel any accusation that even by implication it attributes to the Father any wrathful bearing toward the Son. "Christ was at no time the object of his Father's personal displeasure, but suffered only the signs—the *effect*, not the *affection*—of divine anger."<sup>1</sup> The incarnation, the self-divestment of a rightful glory in equality with the Father, the assumption, instead, of the form of a servant in the likeness of men, are all the same on the one theory as on the other. There is the same infinite depth of condescension. Equal sorrow and agony force the earnest prayer and bloody sweat in Gethsemane, and the bitter outcry on Calvary.

Any question, therefore, between these two theories respecting the sufferings of Christ concerns their nature, and not either their measure or redemptive office. And in these facts—in the divine compassion which embraced a perishing world, in the infinite sacrifice of that compassion, in the gracious purpose and provision of that sacrifice—is the manifestation of the divine love. "Herein is love." "God so loved the world." And to call his sufferings penal—or had they been so in fact—would add nothing either to the measure or manifestation of the divine love in human redemption.

Yet, without the penal element in the sufferings of Christ, we may attribute to them a peculiar depth and cast arising out of their relation to sin in their redemptive office, and find the explanation in the facts of psychology. It is no presumption so to apply such fact. The human nature was present as a constituent element in the person of Christ. And there is no more reason to deny its influence upon his consciousness than to deny such influence to his divine nature. So far, therefore, as his consciousness shared in experiences through the human nature, they would be kindred to our own.

We have our own experiences in the clear apprehension of justice, and sin, and penalty. The feelings hence arising would be far deeper on hearing a verdict of guilt and a judgment pronounced upon the criminal. The higher and purer our spiritual nature, still the deeper would these feelings be. And could one with the highest attainable moral perfection redeem a criminal simply by vicarious suffering, his inevitable contact with sin in the realiza-

<sup>1</sup> Bruce : *The Humiliation of Christ*, p. 338.

tions of a most vivid apprehension of its demerit and punishment would give a peculiar cast and depth to his sufferings.

So was it in the redemptive sufferings of Christ, but in an infinitely deeper sense. In such redemption he must have had in clearest view the divine holiness, and justice, and wrath; the turpitude and demerit of sin, and the terribleness of its merited penalty. Only in such a view could he comprehend his own work or sacrifice in atonement for sin. And, remembering the moral perfection of his nature, and that his contact was with the sins of all men in the full apprehension of their demerit, of the divine wrath against them, of the terribleness of their just doom, and that his own blood and life, in the conscious purpose of their offering, were a sacrifice in atonement for all, we have reason enough for their peculiar cast and awful depth.

It is urged that penal substitution is necessary, not only for the satisfaction of justice, but also "for satisfying the demands of a SATISFACTION OF CONSCIENCE. guilty conscience, which mere pardon never can appease."<sup>1</sup> The connection of this citation holds the rectoral atonement to be as powerless as the moral for the contentment of conscience. It cannot have rest, except with the merited punishment of sin; therefore, in the case of forgiveness, such punishment must be endured by a substitute.

We fully accept the fact of a deep sense of punitive demerit on account of sin in a truly awakened conscience. This feeling may be so strong as to result in a desire for punishment. There may even be some relief of conscience from the penal endurance. But such a feeling has respect simply to personal demerit, and can be appeased only through personal punishment—if punishment be really necessary to the appeasement.

What is the law of pacification in substitutional punishment? We know not any; nor can there be any, except such punishment be in relief of personal character. But this will not be claimed as possible. Further, it is claimed in behalf of atonement by penal substitution, that, more than any thing else, it deepens the sense of sin and personal demerit. But if its tendency is to the very state of mind involving the deepest unrest, it is impossible to see how it can be necessary to the pacification of the conscience. And if we can find rest only through merited punishment, personal or vicarious, we shall never find it either in this world or in the next.

All relief from the trouble and disquietude arising in the sense of sin and guilt must come in the forgiveness of sin. And to be com-

<sup>1</sup> Hodge : *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 526. See also Shedd : *Theological Essays*, pp. 298, 299.

plete, the forgiveness must be so full and gracious as to draw the soul into a restful assurance of the loving favor of the forgiving Father. It is no discredit to infinite grace to say that the sense of demerit for sins committed can never be eradicated, not even in heaven; though the remorse of sin may be taken away here and now. But even such a sense of demerit tends to a measure of unrest forever, and, apart from every other law, would so result. There is still a law of complete rest—such as we have just given. The true rest will come in a full forgiveness, in the assurances of the divine friendship and love, and in a grateful, joyous love answering to the infinite grace of salvation. In many a happy experience there is already the beginning of this rest. And the atonement in vicarious suffering answers for such facts as fully as that in penal substitution.

Nor has the atonement in vicarious suffering any tendency or liability to Antinomianism. From its own nature it is a provisory or conditional ground, not a causal ground of forgiveness and salvation. From such an atonement no license to sin can be taken. Antinomianism is utterly outlawed. We know very well that satisfactionists very generally discard this heresy. They will deny that it has any logical connection with their theory. Yet in the history of doctrines Antinomianism stands mostly with this soteriology. Nor does it seem remote from a logical consequence to such an atonement. There is substituted punishment, and also substituted righteousness. Whatever penalty we deserve Christ bears; whatever obedience we lack he fulfills. He takes our place under both penalty and precept. What he does and suffers in our stead answer for us in the requirements of justice and law just as though personally our own. In view of such facts, Antinomianism is far worse in its doctrine than in its logic. But the atonement in Christ does not make void the law. Nor has the true doctrine any liability to such a perversion. The atonement in vicarious suffering has this advantage, and is thereby commended as the true one.

4. *The Grotian Theory.*—The theory of atonement now under discussion is often called the Edwardean, and also the New England, theory. It has the former title from the younger Edwards, who contributed much, and among the first, to its American formation. Some find, or think they find, its seed-thoughts in the writings of the elder Edwards, and hence so style it. But satisfactionists deny this source, and earnestly disclaim for him all responsibility for the doctrine.<sup>1</sup> It is called the New England theory because specially elaborated by leading New England divines.<sup>1</sup> But priority and the

<sup>1</sup> Smeaton: *The Apostles' Doctrine of Atonement*, p. 536.

true originality are with Grotius. Nor can we accord to these very learned and able divines an independent origination of the doctrine. They could not have been ignorant of the work of Grotius, nor that in the deeper principles they were at one with him. With differences respecting many points, there is yet such an agreement.<sup>2</sup>

By common consent, and quite irrespective of all dissent from him in doctrine, Grotius was a man of very extraordinary ability and learned attainment. The literary achievements of  
GROTIUS. his youth are a wonder;<sup>3</sup> nor did his mature life falsify the promise of such marvelous precocity. His great abilities and vast learning gave him eminence in science, in philosophy, in statesmanship, in law, in theology. He wrote many books, but to only one of which have we here any occasion for reference.

In theology he was an Arminian, and at a time when he, with many others, suffered no little persecution. But all the tendencies  
AN ARMINIAN. of his mind, as well as the logic of his reason, gave him preference for this system as in comparison with the Calvinism of Gomarus or the Synod of Dort. There was no narrowness in the cast of his soul. On all great questions his views were at once broad and profound. On the rights of conscience, and of religious and political freedom, he was very far in advance of his time. "And, indeed, the Arminian doctrine, which, discarding the Calvinistic dogma of absolute predestination, teaches that man is free to accept or to refuse grace, could not fail to suit a mind such as that of Grotius."<sup>4</sup> Yet he was no latitudinarian; nor was his theology a matter of mere sentiment. It was the fruit of profound study. And the more protracted and the profounder his study the more thorough was his Arminianism.

Grotius held firmly the fact of an atonement in Christ. In this faith he undertook its discussion, having in special view its defense  
HIS DEFENSIO. against the assumptions and objections of the Socinian scheme. Such is the import of the title which he gave to his work.<sup>5</sup> It is not clear that he began the discussion with full

<sup>1</sup> *The Atonement. Discourses and Treatises by Edwards, Smalley, Maxey, Emmons, Griffin, Burge, and Weeks.* With an Introductory Essay by Edwards A. Park. In this large volume Professor Park has collected the best New England literature on this subject. His own Introductory Essay adds much to the value of the book.

<sup>2</sup> W. F. Warren: "The Edwardean Theory of Atonement," *Methodist Quarterly Review*, July, 1860.

<sup>3</sup> *New American Cyclopædia*, 1859, art. "Grotius."

<sup>4</sup> McClintock & Strong: *Cyclopædia*, vol. iii, p. 1017.

<sup>5</sup> *Defensio Fidei Catholicæ de Satisfactione Christi Adversus F. Socinum.* Translated in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, January and April, 1879.

forecast of the outcome. He probably had no new theory previously constructed or even outlined in thought. On the authority of Scripture he was sure of an atonement in the blood of Christ. He was sure, therefore, of the error of the Socinian doctrine, and of the fallacy of its objections against this fact. But in its defense he opened his own way to the new theory ever since rightfully connected with his name.

It is rarely the case that the originator of a new theory, especially in a sphere of profound and broadly related doctrinal truth, clears it of all alien elements, or achieves completeness in scientific construction. Such, on this subject, is the <sup>HIS DOCTRINE.</sup> fact with Anselm. It is also true of Grotius. We do not, therefore, accept all his positions. Some are not essential to his doctrine. In others he is not entirely self-consistent. We accept what really constitutes his theory, and have little concern for any thing else. He had an equal right with Anselm to construct a doctrine of atonement, and achieved a higher scientific result. Hence the history of doctrines records less modification in his theory than in the Anselmic. We have no occasion either closely to review or to defend him. This would only anticipate much of the discussion assigned to the present chapter. It would be easy to cite reviews from various authors, and to give references to many others. But their very commonness to discussions of the atonement renders this unnecessary. Yet a few references will follow; and we here give a summary statement of his doctrinal position.

“The fundamental error of the Socinian view was found by Grotius to be this: that Socinus regarded God, in the <sup>SOCINIAN ERROR.</sup> work of redemption, as holding the place merely of a creditor, or master, whose simple will was a sufficient discharge from the existing obligation. But, as we have in the subject before us to deal with punishment and the remission of punishment, God cannot be looked upon as a creditor, or an injured party, since the act of inflicting punishment does not belong to an injured party as such. The right to punish is not one of the rights of an absolute master or of a creditor, these being merely personal in their character; it is the right of a ruler only. Hence God must be considered as a ruler, and the right to punish belongs to the ruler as such, since it exists, not for the punisher’s sake, but for the sake of the commonwealth, to maintain its order and to promote the public good.”<sup>1</sup>

The passage just cited is a very free rendering of the original of Grotius, yet sufficing for the leading ideas. It is given as opening

<sup>1</sup> *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. ix, p. 259. The citation is from a mainly satisfactory review of the Grotian theory by Baur.

up, especially by the logic of its principles, his theory of atonement. It has not entire acceptability. Respecting the right to punish sin as purely a rectoral one, the principle may apply to man, but not to God. He has such a personal right. If Grotius allows an inference to the contrary, so far we think him in error. The case of forgiveness is different; and it is correct to say that God may not forgive sin irrespective of the interests of his moral government. This is a vital principle in the governmental theory. It is the ground on which Grotius maintains the necessity for an atonement and defends it against the objections of Socinianism.

Nor did he hold any doubtful view respecting either the intrinsic evil of sin or the imperative office of penalty. Sin serves eternal penalty, and the penalty must not be remitted, except on rectorally sufficient ground. Thus, after setting forth the reasons for punishment, he says: "God has, therefore, most weighty reasons for punishing, especially if we are permitted to estimate the magnitude and multitude of sins. But because, among all his attributes, love of the human race is pre-eminent. God was willing, though he could have justly punished all men with deserved and legitimate punishment, that is, with eternal death—and had reasons for so doing—to spare those who believe in Christ. But, since we must be spared either by setting forth, or not setting forth, some example against so many great sins, in his most perfect wisdom he chose that way by which he could manifest more of his attributes at once, namely, both clemency and severity, or his hate of sin and care for the preservation of his law."<sup>1</sup> In these views, while essentially divergent from the theory of satisfaction, he is thoroughly valid and conclusive against Socinianism.

While thus asserting the intrinsic evil of sin, Grotius denies an absolute necessity arising therefrom for its punishment. The punishment of sin is just, but not in itself an obligation. The intrinsic evil of sin renders its penal retribution just, but not a requirement of judicial rectitude. Threatened penalty, unless marked by irrevocability, is not absolute. A threat differs from a promise. The latter conveys a right and takes on obligation; the former does not.<sup>2</sup>

In this sense he regarded the divine law as positive, and its penalty as remissible. The law, in precept and penalty, is a divine enactment; in execution, a divine act. The execution is not a judicial obligation, except for rectoral ends. And this is the permissible relaxation of law which Grotius maintains.

<sup>1</sup> *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. xxxvi, p. 287.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 153-155; Dale: *The Atonement*, p. 296.



There is such a relaxation, as there is reality in the divine forgiveness of sin. Nor have satisfactionists any consistent ground for its denial, nor any sufficient reason for their adverse criticism of Grotius on this account. By their own concession that sin, with its demerit, is not and cannot be transferred to Christ, they admit by inevitable implication that it is not punished in him, and hence, that the law in its penalty is relaxed in every instance of non-execution upon the actual sinner.

Holding thus the remissibility of penalty so far as the demerit of sin is concerned, Grotius, as previously noted, maintains, with its justice, its profound importance in the interest of moral government. Forgiveness too freely granted, or too often repeated, and especially on slight grounds, would annul the authority of the law, or render it powerless for its great and imperative rectoral ends. Thus he finds the necessity for an atonement—for some vicarious provision—which, on the remission of penalty, may conserve these ends. Such a provision he finds in the death of Christ, set forth as a penal example. So he styles it. And he makes a very free use of the terms of penal substitution. Yet he does not seem to regard the sufferings of Christ as penal in any very strict sense—certainly not as a substitutional punishment of sin in the satisfaction of a purely retributive justice. Such an example he regards as at once a manifestation of the goodness and severity of God and the odiousness of sin, and as a deterrent from its commission.

Thus his theory of atonement accords with his view of punishment and its remission. These are rectoral rather than personal acts. So the atonement, taking the place of penalty in its rectoral ends, regards God in his administration rather than in his personal character or absolute retributive justice. And thus he grounds the atonement in the principles which properly constitute the governmental theory.

The *Acceptilatio* of Duns Scotus is very freely charged upon Grotius, especially by satisfactionists. Bauer joins in the accusation in the article previously given by reference ; though he does not withhold the fact that Grotius himself formally rejected the principle. This he certainly did, and denied that *acceptilatio* could have any place with the punishment of sin. Repelling this accusation as brought by Socinus against the atonement, he says : “ For, in the first place, this word may be applied, even when no payment precedes, to the right over a thing loaned, but is not, and cannot be, applied to punishment. We nowhere read that indulgence of crimes was called by the ancients *acceptilatio*. For

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that is said to be accepted which can be accepted. The ruler properly exacts corporal punishment, but does not accept it ; because from punishment nothing properly comes to him.”<sup>1</sup> It is as a logical implication that Bauer makes the charge ; but Grotius certainly understood the question, and the logic of its facts and principles, as thoroughly as his reviewer. We join issue, and deny that acceptilation is in any logical sense consequent to the theory of Grotius ; while we affirm its close affinity with that of Anselm.

Leading divines of the Church—Abelard, Bernard, Peter Lombard, Duns Scotus, and others—contemporaries of Anselm, or his close followers in time, were not all close followers of his “ Cur Deus Homo.” Some diverged so widely as to propound really new theories. But Duns Scotus, the heretical acceptilationist, really propounded no new theory in kind. He dissented from Anselm, not respecting the nature of an atonement in the meritorious obedience and suffering of Christ, and in satisfaction or payment of a divine claim—a claim arising out of the wrong which God had suffered on account of sin—not on these determining facts, but respecting the amount of the debt and the relative value of the payment. With Anselm, the debt was infinite ; with Duns, not strictly infinite. With the former, the payment was in full ; with the latter, only in part ; which, however, God graciously accepted in lieu of the whole. This is the *Acceptilatio* of Duns Scotus, as known in historical theology.<sup>2</sup> His divergence was specially from a difference in Christology, or respecting the redemptive sufferings of Christ. With Anselm, his sufferings as the God-man were of infinite value, and therefore a payment in full ; while with Duns they were strictly limited to his human nature, and, therefore, of finite value, and a payment only in part. But he all the while adheres to the same atonement in kind—atonement by payment toward the satisfaction of a divine claim. This is proof that his

DUNS SCOTUS.

MORE ANSELMIC THAN GROTIAN.

*Acceptilatio* has a close affinity to the theory of Anselm. It is only with such a theory that it can have any affinity. It is grounded in the ideas of debt and payment. There must be a divine claim payable in meritorious obedience and suffering. Whatever is paid must go to the account in claim. This is acceptilation. These ideas of debt and payment have full place in the Anselmic theory, as in the satisfaction theory. But Grotius held no theory of sin and penalty, and no theory of atonement, which admits any such sense of debt and payment. His adverse critics clearly prove that he did not. And as he formally denied

<sup>1</sup> *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. xxxvi, p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> Hagenbach : *History of Doctrine*, vol. ii, pp. 39, 44.

acceptilation, and the very possibility of it in the case of penalty for sin, so the principles of his doctrine deny for him all the ideas of debt and payment—and in part as in whole—without which it has no place.

Mr. Watson, while freely citing Grotius as an authority, accuses him of unduly leaning to that view of the atonement which regards it “as a merely *wise* and *fit expedient* of government.”<sup>1</sup> He probably had specially in view this passage in Grotius: “It becomes us only to make this preliminary remark—that Socinus is not right in postulating that we must assign a cause which shall prove that God could not have acted otherwise. For such a cause is not required in those things which God does freely. But he who will maintain that this was a free action may refer to Augustine, who declares not that God had no other possible way of liberating us, but that there was no other more appropriate way for healing our misery, neither could be. But also before Augustine, Athanasius had said: ‘God was able by a mere utterance to annul the curse without coming himself at all. But it is necessary to consider what is useful to men, and not always what is possible to God.’ Nazarius says: ‘It was possible for God even without the incarnation (of Christ) to save us by his mere volition.’ Bernard: ‘Who does not know that the Almighty had at hand various methods for our redemption, justification, liberation? But this does not detract from the efficacy of that method which he has selected out of many.’”<sup>2</sup>

We do not understand Grotius to indorse all these citations, though from authors so eminent. If he did, we certainly could not follow him. And his doctrine of atonement has a far deeper sense than that of a dispensable expedient of government. His position here is that of the divine freedom in the particular manner of human redemption within the limit of a sufficient redemption. Only a divine person could redeem the world; and the redemption could be effected only by a great personal sacrifice. The necessity is from the office which the atonement must fulfill. But, with the profoundest conviction of truth in these facts, we should greatly hesitate to say—indeed, we do not believe—that in the resources of infinite wisdom the precise manner of the mediation of Christ was the only possible manner of human redemption. We are not sure that Grotius means any thing more.

5. *The Consistent Arminian Theory.*—In the reference to Ar-

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. xxxvi, p. 286.

minianism we include the Wesleyan school, and take the position of consistency with special reference to it.

Wesleyan Arminianism has ever been true to the fact of an atonement in Christ. In her hymns and prayers, in her utterances of a living Christian experience, in her sermons and exhortations, this great fact ever receives the fullest recognition. In her soteriology "Christ is all, and in all."<sup>1</sup> In the fullness and constancy of her faith in the reality and necessity of an atonement in Christ, Wesleyan Methodism has no reason to shun any comparison with the most orthodox soteriology.

What is our doctrine of atonement? The answer to this question is not so simple or unperplexed as many, at first thought, would suppose. The Scripture terms of atonement have, with all propriety, been in the freest use with us. Nor have we been careful to shun the terminology of the strictest doctrine of satisfaction. An inquiry for the ideas associated with these terms in the popular thought of Methodism respecting the nature of the atonement would probably bring no very definite answer. In view of all the facts, we are constrained to think that the dominant idea has been that of a real and necessary atonement in Christ, while the idea of its nature has been rather indefinite. We are very sure that, while the popular faith of Methodism has utterly excluded the Socinian view, it has not been at one with the theory of satisfaction.

Our earlier written soteriology has a like indefiniteness. It is always clear and pronounced on the fact of an atonement, but not definite respecting its nature. This, however, should be noted, that our written soteriology, until recently, contains comparatively little on this question.

Mr. Watson's discussion is mainly a dispute with the Socinian scheme and with Calvinistic limitationists. With rare ability he maintains the fact of an atonement against the one, and its universality against the other.<sup>2</sup> But on the question of theories we cannot accord to him any very clear view. Grotius, as it appears, was his chief authority; and next to him, Stillingfleet, who wrote mainly in defense of Grotius.<sup>3</sup> But Grotius, while giving the principles of a new theory, did not, as previously noted, give to its construction scientific completeness. He wrote from the stand-point of the Reformed doctrine, but with such new principles as really constitute another doctrine. But, clear and determining as his principles are, he failed to give either theory in scientific

<sup>1</sup> Col. iii, 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, chapters xix-xxix.

<sup>3</sup> Works, vol. iii, p. 227.

completeness. This is just what Mr. Watson has failed to do. And he is less definite than Grotius himself.

He rejects the doctrine of satisfaction in its usual exposition, and requires for its acceptance such modifications as it cannot admit. He interprets satisfaction much in the manner of Grotius, and hence in a sense which the Reformed doctrine must reject. And the doctrine which he arraigns and refutes as the antinomian atonement is the Calvinistic doctrine of satisfaction, with the formal rejection of its antinomian implications. He is, therefore, not a satisfactionist.<sup>1</sup>

The principles of moral government in which Mr. Watson grounds the necessity for an atonement mainly determine for him the governmental theory.<sup>2</sup> The same is true of his discussion of the "*vinculum*" between the sufferings of Christ and the forgiveness of sins.<sup>3</sup> And when we add his broader views in soteriology as including the universality of the atonement, its strictly provisory character, and the real conditionality of its saving grace—views necessarily belonging to all consistent Arminian theology, and which Mr. Watson so fully maintained—his principles require for him the governmental theory. The more certainly is this so, as it is impossible to construct any new doctrine of a real atonement between this and the satisfaction theory.

So far as we know, Dr. Whedon has never given his theory of atonement in the style of the governmental; yet it is in principle the same. In his statement of the doctrines of Methodism it is given thus: "Christ as truly died as a substitute for the sinner as Damon could have died as a substitute for Pythias. Yet to make the parallel complete, Damon should so die for Pythias as that, unless Pythias should accept the substitution of Damon in all its conditions, he should not receive its benefits, and Damon's death should be for him in vain; Pythias may be as rightfully executed as if Damon had not died. If the sinner accept not the atonement, but deny the Lord that bought him, Christ has died for him in vain; he perishes for whom Christ died. If the whole human race were to reject the atonement, the atonement would be a demonstration of the righteousness and goodness of God, but would be productive of aggravation of human guilt rather than of salvation from it. The imputation of the sin of man, or his punishment, to Christ, is but a popular conception, justifiable, if understood as only conceptual; just as we might say that Damon was *punished* instead of Pythias. In strictness of language and thought

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, pp. 138-143.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 87-102.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 143-145.

neither crime, guilt, nor punishment is personally transferable.”<sup>1</sup> Any one at all familiar with theories of atonement will see at a glance that the principles contained in this statement are thoroughly exclusive of the satisfaction theory, and that they have a true scientific position only with the rectoral theory. The same is true of the doctrine in the sermon to which reference is given.

On the theory of atonement we understand Dr. Raymond to be with Dr. Whedon. He states the doctrine thus: RAYMOND'S VIEW. “The death of Christ is not a substituted penalty, but a substitute for a penalty. The necessity of an atonement is not found in the fact that the justice of God requires an invariable execution of deserved penalty, but in the fact that the honor and glory of God, and the welfare of his creatures, require that his essential and rectoral righteousness be adequately declared. The death of Christ is exponential of divine justice, and is a satisfaction in that sense, and not in the sense that it is, as of a debt, the full and complete payment of all its demands.”<sup>2</sup> The principles given in this passage exclude the satisfaction atonement, and require as their only scientific position the rectoral theory. All this is even more apparent when the passage cited is interpreted in the light of the further references given.

With this view Dr. Raymond's doctrine of justification, as that of every consistent Arminian, fully accords. It is not a discharge of the sinner through the merited punishment of his sin in his substitute, but an actual forgiveness, and such as can issue only in the non-execution of penalty.<sup>3</sup>

The principles and office of the atonement in Christ, as maintained by Dr. Bledsoe, agree with the governmental theory. BLEDSE'S VIEW. This will be clear to any one who will read with discrimination his discussion of the question.<sup>4</sup> And with Arminians he is rightfully a representative author on questions of this kind.

The Wesleyan soteriology, taken as a whole, excludes the satisfaction theory, and requires the governmental as the only theory consistent with itself. WESLEYAN SOTERIOLOGY. The doctrines of soteriology, with the atonement included, must admit of systemization, and be in scientific accord. If not, there is error at some point, as no truth can be in discord with any other truth. Now certain cardinal doctrines of the Wesleyan soteriology are very conspicuous and entirely settled. One is that the atonement is only

<sup>1</sup> *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. xix, pp. 260, 261. Dr. Whedon gives the same views in his sermon on Substitutional Atonement.

<sup>2</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 257, 258. See also pp. 261, 264-268.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 258.

<sup>4</sup> *Theodicy*, pp. 276-293.

provisory in its character; that it renders men salvable, but does not necessarily save them. Another, and the consequence of the former, is the conditionality of salvation. Nor is this such as Calvinism often asserts, yet holds with the monergism of the system, but a real conditionality in accord with the synergism of the truest Arminianism. On these facts there is neither hesitation nor divergence in Methodism. With these facts, the atonement of satisfaction must be excluded from her system of doctrines, and the rectoral theory maintained as the only doctrine of a real atonement agreeing with them.

## II. PUBLIC JUSTICE.

We previously treated justice in its distinctions as commutative, distributive, punitive—the last being a special phase of the distributive. We also named public justice, but deferred it for discussion in connection with the rectoral theory of atonement. We have now reached the proper place for its treatment.

1. *Relation of Public Justice to Atonement.*—Any theory of atonement embodying enough truth to be really a theory must take special account of divine justice. The relation between the two is most intimate; so intimate, indeed, that the view of justice must be determinative of the theory of atonement. This we found to be true of the theory of satisfaction. It is not only in accord with the principles of justice asserted in connection with it, but is imperatively required by them. They will admit no other doctrine. If justice must punish sin simply for the reason of its demerit, penal substitution is the only possible atonement. So the governmental theory must be consistent with the doctrine of justice maintained in connection with it; and, to be true, must accord with justice as a divine attribute, and in all its relations to sin and to the ends of moral government.

As in the satisfaction theory, so in the rectoral, the sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin only as in some sense they take the place of penalty. But they do not replace penalty in the same sense in both. In the one they take its place as a penal substitute, thus fulfilling the office of justice in the actual punishment of sin; in the other they take its place in the fulfillment of its office as concerned with the interests of moral government. It is the office of justice to maintain these interests through the means of penalty. Therefore, atonement in the mediation of Christ must so take the place of penalty as to fulfill this same office, while the penalty is remitted.

Such being the office of atonement in the governmental theory,

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it is clear that for a proper exposition of the doctrine we require an exact and discriminating statement of public justice, or of penalty as the means of justice for the conservation of moral government. We shall thus secure a right construction of the doctrine, and, also, obviate certain objections which have no validity against the doctrine itself, whatever force they may have against defective forms of it. No ground will remain for objecting either that the theory makes light of the demerit of sin, or that it transforms justice into mere benevolence, or that it regards the substitution of Christ in suffering as a mere expedient, in place of which some other provision would answer as well.

2. *Public Justice one with Divine Justice.*—Public justice is not a distinct kind of justice; not other than divine justice. It is divine justice in moral administration. God is moral Ruler only as he has moral subjects. Therefore, in the eternity antecedent to their creation he existed without any rectoral office of justice. Their creation gave him no new attribute, though it brought him into new relations. In these new relations to moral beings his justice, an essential and eternal attribute of his nature, found its proper office in moral government. In the fulfillment of this office it rules through the means of reward and penalty. So, in the moral system, public justice is the one divine justice in moral administration.

3. *One with Distributive Justice.*—In principle public justice is one with distributive justice. Subjects differ in moral character. Some are obedient to the law of duty; others, disobedient. This makes a difference in character. The difference is real and intrinsic. So the law of God discriminates the two classes. In this our moral reason is in full consent with the divine law. In the profoundest convictions of our moral consciousness we are assured of the reality of moral obligation, and of an essential ethical difference between obedience and disobedience; and equally, that the former has merit or rewardableness, and the latter, punitive desert. So in moral administration God deals with men according to their conduct, rewarding their obedience and punishing their sin. The fact does not require exact justice in the present state of probation. Such is the law of our responsible being. But this, in essential principle and rectoral office, is simply public justice, or justice in moral administration. All its use of reward and penalty, and for whatever reason or end, is in the view of moral character in the subjects of government. Public justice is, therefore, no law of mere expediency, or of mere expedients; in essential principle and in office it is one with divine justice, one with distributive justice.



4. *Ground of its Penalties.*—Within the realm of the divine government the sole ground of the penalties of administrative or public justice lies in the demerit of sin. The fact is not other, nor in any sense modified by any or all the ulterior ends or utilities of penalty in the interest of moral government. All penal infliction falls upon the demerit of sin as really and restrictedly as though its punishment were the sole thing in the divine view. This is justice, and this only. Public justice has no other ground for its penalties. Nor may it, except on such ground, inflict any penalty for any ulterior end or interest, however great and urgent. This truth cannot be too deeply emphasized.

We are speaking of divine justice in moral administration. Any thing qualifying the administration of justice in human government arises, in part, from a want of punitive prerogative over the intrinsic demerit of sin; in part, from an inability <sup>ONLY DEMERIT.</sup> to know in any given case what the real demerit is. We may infer the guilt from the apparent motive, but we cannot search the heart. Hence, in dealing with human conduct, our rightful use of penalty is not really to punish sin as having intrinsic demerit, but to protect society from its injury. The former is the divine prerogative. God searches the heart, and knows all the secret springs and motives of human action. He knows all the sinfulness of such action. It is his sole right to punish it, simply as such. In all the universe, and for any and all purposes, he has nothing but sin to punish.

On this ground public justice is one with distributive justice, one with divine justice; and as wrought into a proper rectoral atonement even more rigidly adheres to the principle than <sup>GUILT ONLY</sup> the purely retributive justice as wrought into the <sup>WITH DEMERIT.</sup> theory of satisfaction. This theory equally asserts the same principle, but departs from it in the futile attempt to separate guilt from demerit, to carry it over by imputation to Christ, and so to have the merited penalty inflicted upon him, while the sinner and the sin are left behind. This is a real departure from the principle. We may technically distinguish between sin and guilt, taking the former for personal demerit and the latter for answerableness in penalty. We go further, and say that on such distinction there may be personal demerit without guilt—as a soul graciously forgiven still has such demerit but not such guilt. But the converse, that there may be guilt apart from demerit—guilt as an amenability to penalty—does not follow and is not true. Yet it is the very truth of this converse which the scheme of satisfaction requires as vital to its doctrine of atonement by penal substitution.

We emphasize the principle, that in moral government personal demerit is the only source of guilt, and the only ground of just punishment. If there be any thing valid in the imputation of another's sin, it must transfer the demerit before guilt can arise or the punishment be just. On this principle all divine penalties, whether executed or only uttered, and in the utterance as in the execution, at once express both the divine justice and the demerit of sin. Hence the execution is not really necessary to that expression. The use and value of this fact will come directly. And we shall find with it a sure basis for the governmental theory.

5. *End of its Penalties.*—We have not a full exposition of justice simply in its relation to the demerit of sin. In this demerit we have the real and only ground of punishment. But in making the retribution of sin the sole office of penalty we deny a proper public justice. Penalty has no reformatory purpose respecting the subject of its infliction, no exemplary character, no office as a deterrent from sin. With such functions of penalty we have a public justice. Also, we have weighty reasons for punishment besides the demerit of sin. Any doctrine of justice which omits such facts, or holds it simply to the retribution of sin, is very narrow, and utterly fails to measure its vast sphere. Justice, as concerned in moral government, must deeply regard all legislation, that laws be in accord with the obligations, rights, and interests of subjects; that the sanctions of reward and penalty, while equitable, be wisely adjusted to their high rectoral ends. In all moral administration it must be supremely concerned for the promotion of virtue, and the protection of the rights and interests of all. Thus we have profound reasons for penalty additional to the demerit of sin. Nor has penalty any rational account simply as retributive. It does not so answer to the common moral judgment respecting it, nor to the severe denunciations of Scripture against criminal injuries, nor to the many appeals therein to instances of divine retribution as deterrents from sin. And for a right exposition of justice we must take large account of its strictly rectoral ends.

There is another extreme view, even more impotent, if possibly so, for any philosophy of penalty. It is in making the strictly rectoral ends of punishment the whole account of it. This omits the proper retributive element. Punishment thus becomes an injustice. No interests of government, however great and urgent, could render it just. Only demerit in the subjects of its infliction can do this. Besides, such a view denies to

VALUE OF THE PRINCIPLE.

REASONS FOR PUNISHMENT.

RETRIBUTIVE ELEMENT.

penalty all capacity for service in such interests. Except in the most restricted measure, such service can be rendered only through a right moral impression. Unmerited punishment never could make such an impression. The moral nature never can respond in loyalty to injustice. And however such punishment might influence outward action, it would ever turn away the heart into rebellion rather than win it to obedience. "Take away from punishment this foundation of justice and you destroy its utility; you substitute indignation and abhorrence for a salutary lesson and for repentance, both in the condemned and in the public; you put courage, sympathy, all that is noble and great in human nature, on the side of the victim; you rouse all energetic souls against society and its artificial laws. Thus even the utility of punishment rests upon its justice. The punishment is the sanction of law, not its foundation."<sup>1</sup> All this is as true in the divine government as in the human sphere. And, whatever temporary service might be rendered in the latter case, in the divine government, the consequences would be fatal: for here only the loyalty of the heart will answer. This never could be secured by a measure of injustice from which it must revolt. And personal demerit, as the only ground of justice in punishment, is absolutely necessary to all the service of penalty in the interests of moral government. A true doctrine of public justice never departs from this principle.

We thus combine the two elements in the exposition of public justice. Only thus have we a public justice. Omitting the rectoral element, justice is purely retributive, having regard to nothing except the punishment of sin. Omitting the retributive element, justice is injustice. Holding the distinction of justice as retributive and rectoral, and combining the two elements in the one doctrine, we free the question of punishment from the perplexity which its history records.<sup>2</sup> The distinction is valid. There are the two offices of justice. But they must never be separated. Penalty, as a means in the use of justice, has an end beyond the retribution of sin: But, whatever its ulterior end, it is just only as it threatens, or falls upon, demerit. And only thus can it fulfill its high office in the interests of moral government.

It is in the failure first properly to discriminate the two offices of justice in the punishment of sin and the protection of rights, and then to properly combine the two elements in the one doctrine of punishment, that the rectoral atonement exposes itself to really serious objections, which yet have no validity

<sup>1</sup> Cousin: *History of Modern Philosophy*, vol. ii, pp. 279, 280.

<sup>2</sup> Cousin: *Psychology*, translated by C. S. Henry, pp. 317, 318.

against a true construction of the theory. It is against such an erroneous construction that objections are chiefly urged. They are specially urged against it as embodying, or as assumed to embody, that view of justice which makes its strictly rectoral ends the sole account of penalty. "It is on this false principle that the whole governmental theory of atonement is founded. It admits of no ground of punishment but the benefit of others."<sup>1</sup> We represent no such a theory. We discard it as fully as Dr. Hodge, or any other advocate of the satisfaction atonement. Our previous discussions so certify. Hence the objection which the quotation implies is utterly void against the doctrine of atonement, as we construct and maintain it.

It is in the same line of objection that we have cited "a story of an English judge who once said to a criminal, 'You are transported, not because you have stolen these goods, but that goods may not be stolen.'"<sup>2</sup> We would not defend the propriety of such a delivery. Indeed, we think it very injudicious. A criminal should feel that he deserves the penalty inflicted upon him; otherwise, his punishment can have no tendency toward his amendment. An impression of such desert should also be made upon the public mind, as necessary to the public benefit. But in neither case can the necessary salutary impression be made where all mention of punitive desert is omitted, or where any reference to it is entirely to dismiss it from all connection with the punishment inflicted. Yet there is a deep sense in which such an utterance is true. It is clearly so in human jurisdiction. Nor is the view either novel or rare. "The proper end of human punishment is, not the satisfaction of justice, but the prevention of crimes."<sup>3</sup> "As to the end or final cause of human punishments, this is not by way of atonement or expiation for the crime committed—for that must be left to the just determination of the Supreme Being—but as a precaution against future offenses of the same kind."<sup>4</sup>

There is really no error here. And all is consistent with the doctrine of punishment which we have maintained. Demerit is still the only ground of punishment. Penalty falls upon sin, and upon that only. But prominence is given to its exemplary or strictly rectoral function. It is inflicted for the sake of its governmental ends, yet only on sin as deserving it. Against such a doctrine of punishment the adverse criticism of Dr. Hodge is utterly nugatory. The same principles are valid in respect

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<sup>1</sup> Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 579.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Paley: *Moral and Political Philosophy*, book vi, chap. ix.

<sup>4</sup> Blackstone: *Commentaries* (Sharswood's), vol. ii, book iv, pp. 11.

to the divine administration. While divine penalty falls only upon sin, the supreme reason for its infliction is in the rectoral ends with which moral government is concerned. Nor is the penal infliction a moral necessity apart from these ends. And this distinction between the ground and end of penalty, together with such a connection of the two that penalty is never inflicted for the sake of its end except on the ground of demerit, gives us the true philosophy of punishment.

With such principles, it is easy to show the fallacy of another objection urged against the governmental atonement. It is, that the theory of penalty which the scheme represents would justify the punishment of the innocent in case the common welfare could thereby be the better served.

ANOTHER  
GROUNDLESS  
OBJECTION.

“If the prevention of crime were the primary end of punishment, then if the punishment of the innocent—the execution, for example, of the wife and children of a murderer—would have a greater restraining influence than the punishment of the guilty murderer, their execution would be just.”<sup>1</sup> An advocate of the satisfaction theory should be a little cautious how he charges upon even a hypothetical penal substitution of the innocent, lest he suffer in the recoil of his own objection. Certainly he will find trouble in the matter of self-consistency, for his own principles render the supposed instance admissible, so far as justice is concerned. But why the supposition of so impossible a thing? Dr. Hodge well knows that such a benefit, by such means, is utterly impossible. And neither the attainableness nor actual attainment of such a result could render such penal substitution just. This follows from our doctrine of justice, as it does not from that of the satisfactionists. In ours, only personal demerit is a ground of just punishment; while in theirs mere guilt, apart from demerit, and carried over by imputation to another, constitutes in him a ground of just punishment. But we need not further answer to the arraignment in the quotation given above, for, whatever weight the objection which it urges may have against the doctrine of others, it has no validity against our own.

6. *Remissibility of its Penalties.*—There is no sufficient reason why sin must be punished solely on the ground of its demerit. The forgiveness of the actual sinner, as a real remission of penalty at the time of his justification and acceptance in the divine favor, is proof positive to the contrary. And, all other ends apart, retributive justice may remit its penalty. It may do this without an atonement. Indeed, it does not admit of an atonement in satisfaction of such

<sup>1</sup> Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, vol. i, p. 423.

remission. It is here, as noticed before, that we part by a fundamental principle with the theory of satisfaction. It denies the remissibility of penalty, as due solely to the demerit of sin, on any and all grounds. Hence, it requires for any discharge of the actual sinner a vicarious punishment in full satisfaction of a purely retributive justice. We maintain the proper retributive character of divine justice in all the use of penalty in moral administration; but the retributive element of justice does not bar the remissibility of its penalties. The law of expediency determines the measure of divine penalties within the demerit of sin. And from their ends in the interest of moral government they are remissible on such ground, but only on such ground, as will equally secure these ends. This principle is fundamental with us, and determinative of our theory of atonement.

7. *Place for Atonement.*—Thus the way is open for some substitutional provision which may replace the actual infliction of penalty upon sin. The theory of satisfaction, as we have seen, really leaves no place for vicarious atonement. Its most fundamental and ever-asserted principle, that sin as such must be punished, makes the punishment of the actual sinner an absolute necessity. But as penalties are remissible so far as a purely retributive justice is concerned, so, having a special end in the interest of moral government, they may give place to any substitutional measure equally securing that end. Here is a place for vicarious atonement.

8. *Nature of the Atonement Determined.*—The nature of the atonement in the sufferings of Christ follows necessarily from the above principle. It cannot be of the nature required by the principles of the satisfaction theory. In asserting the absoluteness of divine justice in its purely retributive element, the theory excludes the possibility of a penal substitute in atonement for sin. And, therefore, the sufferings of Christ are not, as they cannot be, an atonement by penal substitution. But while his sufferings could not take the place of penalty in the actual punishment of sin, they could, and do, take its place in its strictly rectoral end. And the atonement is thus determined to consist in the sufferings of Christ, as a provisory substitute for penalty in the interest of moral government.

### III. THEORY AND NECESSITY FOR ATONEMENT.

1. *An Answer to the Real Necessity.*—The redemptive mediation of Christ implies a necessity for it. There should be, and in scientific consistency must be, an accordance between a doctrine of atonement and the ground of its necessity.

The moral theory finds in the ignorance and evil tendencies of

man a need for higher moral truth and motive than reason affords ; a need for all the higher truths and motives of the Gospel. There is such a need—very real and very urgent. And Christ has graciously supplied the help so needed. But we yet have no part of the necessity for an objective ground of forgiveness. Hence this scheme does not answer to the real necessity for an atonement.

Did the necessity arise out of an absolute justice which must punish sin, the theory of satisfaction would be in accord with it, but without power to answer to its requirement, because such a necessity precludes substitutional atonement.

We do find the real necessity in the interests of moral government—interests which concern the divine glory and authority, and the welfare of moral beings. THE CASE STATED. Whatever will conserve these ends while opening the way of forgiveness answers to the real necessity in the case. Precisely this is done by the atonement which we maintain. In the requirement of the sacrifice of Christ as the only ground of forgiveness the standard of the divine estimate of sin is exalted, and merited penalty is rendered more certain respecting all who fail of forgiveness through redemptive grace. And these are the special moral forces whereby the divine law may restrain sin, protect rights, guard innocence, and secure the common welfare. Further, the doctrine we maintain not only gives to these salutary forces the highest moral potency, but also combines with them the yet higher force of the divine love as revealed in the marvelous means of our redemption. Thus, while the highest good of moral beings is secured, the divine glory receives its highest revelation. The doctrine has, therefore, not only the support derived from an answer to the real necessity for an atonement, but also the commendation of a vast increase in the moral forces of the divine government.

2. *Grounded in the Deepest Necessity.*—We are here in direct issue with the doctrine of satisfaction : for here its advocates make special claim in its favor, and urge special objections against ours. We already have the principles and facts which must decide the question.

In their scheme, the necessity lies in an absolute obligation of justice to punish sin, simply as such, and ultimately in a SATISFACTION VIEW. divine punitive disposition. But we have previously shown that there is no such necessity. We have maintained a punitive disposition in God ; but we also find in him a compassion for the very sinners whom his justice so condemns. And we may as reasonably conclude that his disposition of clemency will find its satisfaction in a gratuitous forgiveness of all as that he will not for-

give any, except on the equivalent punishment of a substitute. Who can show that the punitive disposition is the stronger? We challenge the presentation of a fact in its expression that shall parallel the cross in expression of the disposition of mercy. And with no absolute necessity for the punishment of sin, it seems clear that but for the requirements of rectoral justice compassion would triumph over the disposition of a purely retributive justice. Hence this alleged absolute necessity for an atonement is really no necessity at all.

What is the necessity in the governmental theory? It is such as arises in the rightful honor and authority of the divine Ruler, and in the rights and interests of moral beings under him. The free remission of sins without an atonement would be their surrender. Hence divine justice itself, still having all its punitive disposition, but infinitely more concerned for these rights and interests than in the mere retribution of sin, must interpose all its authority in bar of a mere administrative forgiveness. The divine holiness and goodness, infinitely concerned for these great ends, must equally bar a forgiveness in their surrender. The divine justice, holiness, and love must, therefore, combine in the imperative requirement of an atonement in Christ as the necessary ground of forgiveness. These facts ground it in the deepest necessity.

The rectoral ends of moral government are a profounder imperative with justice itself than the retribution of sin, simply as such. One stands before the law in the demerit of crime. His demerit renders his punishment just, though not a necessity. But the protection of others, who would suffer wrong through his impunity, makes his punishment an obligation of judicial rectitude. The same principles are valid in the divine government. The demerit of sin imposes no obligation of punishment upon the divine Ruler; but the protection of rights and interests by means of merited penalty is a requirement of his judicial rectitude, except as that protection can be secured through some other means. It is true, therefore, that the rectoral atonement is grounded in the deepest necessity.

3. *Rectoral Value of Penalty.*—We have sufficiently distinguished between the purely retributive and the rectoral offices of penalty. The former respects simply the demerit of sin; the latter, the great ends to be attained through the ministry of justice and law. As the demerit of sin is the only thing justly punishable, the retributive element always conditions the rectoral office of justice; but the former is conceivable without the latter. Penal retribution



may, therefore, be viewed as a distinct fact, and entirely in itself. As such, it is simply the punishment of sin because of its demerit, and without respect to any other reason or end. But as we rise to the contemplation of divine justice in its infinitely larger sphere, and yet not as an isolated attribute, but in its inseparable association with infinite holiness, and wisdom, and love, as attributes of the one divine Ruler over innumerable moral beings, we must think that his retribution of sin always has ulterior ends in the interests of his moral government. We therefore hold all divine punishment to have a strictly rectoral function.

Punishment is the ultimate resource of all righteous government. Every good ruler will seek to secure obedience, and all other true ends of a wise and beneficent administration, THE LAST RESORT. through the highest and best means. Of no other is this so true as of the divine Ruler. On the failure of such means there is still the resource of punishment which shall put in subjection the harmful agency of the incorrigible. Thus rights and interests are protected. This protection is a proper rectoral value of penalty, but a value realized only in its execution.

There is a rectoral value of penalty simply as an element of law. It has such value in a potency of influence upon human conduct. A little analysis will reveal its salutary forces. PENALTY IN LAW. Penalty, in its own nature, and also through the moral ideas with which it is associated, makes its appeal to certain motivities in man. As it finds a response therein, so has it a governing influence, and a more salutary influence as the response is to the higher associated ideas.

First of all, penalty, as an element of law, appeals to an instinctive fear. The intrinsic force of the appeal is determined by its severity and the certainty of its execution; LOWER VALUE. but the actual influence is largely determined by the state of our subjective motivity. Some are seemingly quite insensible to the greatest severity and certainty of threatened penalty, while others are deeply moved thereby. Human conduct is, in fact, thus greatly influenced. This, however, is the lowest power of penalty as a motive; yet it is not without value. Far better is it that evil tendencies should be restrained, and outward conformity to law secured, through such fear than not at all.

The chief rectoral value of penalty, simply as an element of law, is through the moral ideas which it conveys, and the response which it thus finds in the moral reason. CHIEF VALUE. As the soul answers to these ideas in the healthful activities of conscience and the profounder sense of obligation, so the governing force

of penalty takes the higher form of moral excellence. As it becomes the clear utterance of justice itself in the declaration of rights in all their sacredness, and in the reprobation of crime in all its forms of injury or wrong, and depth of punitive desert, so it conveys the imperative lessons of duty, and rules through the profounder principles of moral obligation. Now rights are felt to be sacred, and duties are fulfilled because they are such, and not from fear of the penal consequences of their violation or neglect. The same facts have the fullest application to penalty as an element of the divine law. Here its higher rectoral value will be, and can only be, through the higher revelation of God in his moral attributes as ever active in all moral administration.

4. *Rectoral Value of Atonement.*—The sufferings of Christ, as a proper substitute for punishment, must fulfill the office of penalty in the obligatory ends of moral government. The manner of fulfillment is determined by the nature of the service. As the salutary rectoral force of penalty, as an element of law, is specially through the moral ideas which it reveals, so the vicarious sufferings of Christ must reveal like moral ideas, and rule through them. Not else can they so take the place of penalty as, on its remission, to fulfill its high rectoral office. Hence the vicarious sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin as they reveal God in his justice, holiness, and love; in his regard for his own honor and law; in his concern for the rights and interests of moral beings; in his reprobation of sin as intrinsically evil, and utterly hostile to his own rights and to the welfare of his subjects.

Does the atonement in Christ reveal such truths? We answer, Yes. Nor do we need the impossible penal element of the theory of satisfaction for any part of this revelation.

God reveals his profound regard for the sacredness of his law, and REGARD FOR HIS LAW. for the interests which it conserves, by what he does for their support and protection. In direct legislative and administrative forms he ordains his law, with declarations of its sacredness and authority; embodies in it the weightiest sanctions of reward and penalty; reprobates in severest terms all disregard of its requirements, and all violation of the rights and interests which it would protect; visits upon transgression the fearful penalties of his retributive justice, though always at the sacrifice of his compassion. The absence of such facts would evince an indifference to the great interests concerned; while their presence evinces, in the strongest manner possible to such facts, the divine regard for these interests. These facts, with the moral ideas which they embody, give weight and salutary governing power to the divine law. The omis-

sion of the penal element would, without a proper rectoral substitution, leave the law in utter weakness.

Now let the sacrifice of Christ be substituted for the primary necessity of punishment, and as the sole ground of forgive-THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST.ness. But we should distinctly note what it replaces in the divine law and wherein it may modify the divine administration. The law remains, with all its precepts and sanctions. Penalty is not annulled. There is no surrender of the divine honor and authority. Rights and interests are no less sacred, nor guarded in feebler terms. Sin has the same reprobation; penalty the same imminence and severity respecting all persistent impenitence and unbelief. The whole change in the divine economy is this—that on the sole ground of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ all who repent and believe may be forgiven and saved. This is the divine substitution for the primary necessity of punishment. While, therefore, all the other facts in the divine legislation and administration remain the same, and in unabated expression of truths of the highest rectoral force and value, this divine sacrifice in atonement for sin replaces the lesson of a primary necessity for punishment with its own higher revelation of the same salutary truths; rather, it adds its own higher lesson to that of penalty. As penalty remains in its place, remissible, indeed, on proper conditions, yet certain of execution in all cases of unrepented sin, and, therefore, often executed in fact, the penal sanction of law still proclaims all the rectoral truth which it may utter. Hence the sacrifice of Christ in atonement for sin, and in the declaration of the divine righteousness in forgiveness, is an additional and infinitely higher utterance of the most salutary moral truths.<sup>1</sup> The cross is the highest revelation of all the truths which embody the best moral forces of the divine government.

The atonement in Christ is so original and singular in many of its facts that it is the more difficult to find in human facts the analogies for its proper illustration. Yet there ANALOGIES. are facts not without service here.

An eminent lecturer, in a recent discussion of the atonement, has given notoriety to a measure of Bronson Alcott in the ALCOTT. government of his school.<sup>2</sup> He substituted his own chastisement for the infliction of penalty upon his offending pupil, receiving the infliction at the hand of the offender. No one can rationally think such a substitution penal, or that the sin of the pupil was expiated by the stripes which the master suffered instead.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Cook: *Boston Monday Lectures*, "Orthodoxy," pp. 156-162.

The substitution answered simply for the disciplinary ends of penalty. Without reference either to the theory of Bronson Alcott or to the interpretation of Joseph Cook, we so state the case as most obvious in the philosophy of its own facts. Such office it might well fulfill. And we accept the report of the very salutary result, not only as certified by the most reliable authority, but also as intrinsically most credible. No one in the school, and to be ruled by its discipline, could henceforth think less gravely of any offense against its laws. No one could think either that the master regarded with lighter reprobation the evil of such offense, or that he was less resolved upon a rigid enforcement of obedience. All these ideas must have been intensified, and in a manner to give them the most healthful influence. The vicarious sacrifice of the master became a potent and most salutary moral element in the government maintained. Even the actual punishment of the offender could not have so secured obedience for the sake of its own obligation and excellence.

We may also instance the case of Zaleucus, very familiar in discussions of atonement, though usually accompanied with such denials of analogy as would render it useless for illustration. It is useless on the theory of satisfaction, but valuable on a true theory.

Zaleucus was lawgiver and ruler of the Locrians, a Grecian colony early founded in southern Italy. His laws were severe, and his administration rigid; yet both were well suited to the manners of the people. His own son was convicted of violating a law, the penalty of which was blindness. The case came to Zaleucus both as ruler and father. Hence there was a conflict in his soul. He would have been an unnatural father, and of such a character as to be unfit for a ruler, had he suffered no conflict of feeling. His people entreated his clemency for his son. But, as a statesman, he knew that the sympathy which prompted such entreaty could be but transient; that in the reaction he would suffer their accusation of partiality and injustice; that his laws would be dishonored and his authority broken. Still there was the conflict of soul. What should he do for the reconciliation of the ruler and the father? In this exigency he devised an atonement by the substitution of one of his own eyes for one of his son's.<sup>1</sup>

This was a provision above law and retributive justice. Neither had any penalty for the ruler and father on account of the sin of the son. The substitution, therefore, was not penal. The vicarious suffering was not in any sense retributive. It

<sup>1</sup> Warburton: *Divine Legation of Moses*, vol. i, pp. 180-184; Anton: *Classical Dictionary*, p. 1492.

could not be so. All the conditions of penal retribution were wanting. No one can rationally think that the sin of the son, or any part of it, was expiated by the suffering of the father in his stead. The transference of sin as a whole is unreasonable enough; but the idea of a division of it, a part being left with the actual sinner and punished in him, and the other part transferred to a substitute and punished in him, transcends all the capabilities of rational thought.

The substitution, without being penal, did answer for the rectoral office of penalty. The ruler fully protected his own honor and authority. Law still voiced its behests and sanctions with unabated force. And the vicarious sacrifice of the ruler upon the altar of his parental compassion, and as well upon the altar of his administration, could but intensify all the ideas which might command for him honor and authority as a ruler, or give to his laws a salutary power over his people.

This, therefore, is a true case of atonement through vicarious suffering, and in close analogy to the divine atonement. In neither case is the substitution for the retribution of sin, but in each for the sake of the rectoral ends of penalty, and thus constitutes the objective ground of its remissibility. We have, therefore, in this instance a clear and forceful illustration of the rectoral value of the atonement. But so far we have presented this value in its nature rather than in its measure. This will find its proper place in treating the sufficiency of the atonement.

5. *Only Sufficient Atonement.*—Nothing could be more fallacious than the objection that the governmental theory is in any sense acceptilational, or implicitly indifferent to the character of the substitute in atonement. In the inevitable logic of its deepest and most determining principles it excludes all inferior substitution and requires a divine sacrifice as the only sufficient atonement. Only such a substitution can give adequate expression to the great truths which may fulfill the rectoral office of penalty. The case of Zaleucus may illustrate this. Many other devices were also at his command. He, no doubt, had money, and might have essayed the purchase of impunity for his son by the distribution of large sums. In his absolute power he might have substituted the blindness of some inferior person. But what would have been the signification or rectoral value of any such measure? It could give no answer to the real necessity in the case, and must have been utterly silent respecting the great truths imperatively requiring affirmation in any adequate substitution. The sacrifice of one of his own eyes for one of his son's did give the requisite affirmation,

while nothing below it could. So in the substitution of Christ for us. No inferior being and no inferior sacrifice could answer, through the expression and affirmation of great rectoral truths, for the necessary ends of penalty. And, as we shall see in the proper place, no other theory can so fully interpret and appropriate all the facts in the sacrifice of Christ. It has a place and a need for every element of atoning value in his substitution.

6. *True Sense of Satisfaction.*—The satisfaction of justice in atonement for sin is not peculiar to the doctrine of satisfaction, technically so-called. It is the distinctive nature of the satisfaction that is so peculiar. The rectoral atonement is also a doctrine of satisfaction to divine justice, and in a true sense. The narrow view which makes the retribution of sin, simply as such, an absolute obligation of justice, and then finds the fulfilment of its office in the punishment of Christ as a substitute in penalty, never can give a true sense of satisfaction. But with broader and truer views of justice, with its ends in moral government as paramount, and with penalties as the rightful means for their attainment ; then the vicarious sufferings of Christ, as more effectually attaining the same ends, are the satisfaction of justice, while freely remitting its penalties. This is a true sense of satisfaction. Consistently with these views we may appropriate the following definition, and none the less consistently because of its appropriation by Dr. Symington, although a satisfactionist in the thorough sense of the Reformed soteriology : “ By satisfaction, in a theological sense, we mean such act or acts as shall accomplish all the moral purposes which, to the infinite wisdom of God, appear fit and necessary under a system of rectoral holiness, and which must otherwise have been accomplished by the exercise of retributive justice upon transgressors in their own persons.”<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. THEORY AND SCRIPTURE INTERPRETATION.

We have previously stated that any theory of atonement, to be true, must be true to the Scriptures. It must also fairly interpret the more specific terms of atonement, and be consistent with all truths and facts having a determining relation to it. We freely submit the theory here maintained to this test. It will answer to all the requirements of the case. Nor will an elaborate discussion be necessary to make the fact clear.

1. *Terms of Divine Wrath.*—The Scriptures abound in expres-

<sup>1</sup> John Pye Smith : *On Sacrifice and Priesthood*, p. 287. Watson gives a similar definition : *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 139 ; also Raymond : *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 259.

sions of the divine wrath.<sup>1</sup> Our theory fully recognizes the fact. And these terms of expression have not their full meaning simply as rectoral or judicial. Nor have we any need of such a restriction.

There is ground for a distinction as we think of God personally and rectorally. There is the same distinction respecting a human ruler. He has his personal character and also his rectoral sphere. Judicial obligation may constrain what the personal feeling not only fails to support, but strongly opposes. Yet a personal disposition in condemnation of crime is very proper in a minister of the law. It is necessary, and must extend to the criminal, if law is to be properly maintained. And the denial of all personal displeasure of God against sin and against sinners would be contrary to his holiness. Even with men, the higher the moral tone the profounder is the reprobation of sin. In the moral perfection of God it has its infinite depth. Yet it is not vindictive or revengeful, and co-exists with an infinite compassion. These dispositions, so diverse in kind and ministry, are yet harmonious in God.

It is in no contrariety to this, that, while punishment is with God in sacrifice of his disposition of clemency, his punitive disposition is in moral support of the sacrifice. Without a retributive disposition in man, law has no sufficient guarantee of enforcement. Mere benevolence toward the common welfare would not answer for the protection of society through the means of penalty. We will not allege such a disability in the divine benevolence; but it is clear that without a retributive disposition in God the punishment of sin would impose a far greater sacrifice upon his compassion. And his punishment of sin is not simply from his benevolence toward the common welfare, nor from the requirement of judicial rectitude, but also from the impulse of a personal punitive disposition. Hence the terms of the divine wrath have a personal as well as an official sense. The doctrine we maintain so interprets them, and thus shows their consistency with itself.

But the divine wrath, so interpreted, asserts no dominance in the mind of God, and is in fullest harmony with his love. It has no necessity for penal satisfaction either in personal contentment or judicial rectitude. As personal, it neither requires nor admits a substitute in penalty as the ground of its surrender. It is in the nature and necessity of such a disposition that any penal satisfaction must be found in the punishment of the

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxviii, 31; Jer. x, 10; Rom. i, 18; Eph. v, 6.

actual sinner. To exaggerate it into a necessity for satisfaction, and then to find the satisfaction in the punishment of Christ as substitute in penalty, is to pervert Scripture exegesis, and equally to pervert all theology and all philosophy in the case. In entire consistency with his personal displeasure, God may and does wish the absence of its provocation and the repentance of the rebellious, that he may save them. And real as the divine displeasure is against sin and against sinners, atonement is made, not in its personal satisfaction, but in fulfillment of the rectoral office of justice. Hence, on the truth in the case, our theory fully interprets the terms of divine wrath.

2. *Terms of Divine Righteousness.*—The Scripture texts which in different ways attribute righteousness to God form a very numerous class.<sup>1</sup> He is righteous; righteousness belongeth unto him; and his doings are righteous. These terms, so applied, are often synonymous with holiness; often with goodness; sometimes with justice; and they give no place to the narrow view which mostly restricts the divine righteousness to the retribution of sin.

If, as asserted, the punishment of sin according to its demerit is an absolute requirement of judicial rectitude in God. WHEREIN  
RIGHTEOUS. so that he is righteous only as he so punishes, or unrighteous in any omission, it follows that our doctrine will not properly interpret these terms. But, as we have previously shown, the divine righteousness is under no such law. In that God legislates, not arbitrarily or oppressively, but wisely and equitably, as with respect to his subjects; inflicts no unjust punishment, but by means of just penalty protects all rights and interests which might suffer wrong from the impunity of sin; and rewards his children according to the provisions and promises appertaining to the economy of grace, he is righteous in the truest and highest sense of judicial righteousness which the Scriptures attribute to him. But these facts are in the fullest accord with our doctrine of atonement. It, therefore, fairly and fully interprets the Scripture terms of the divine righteousness.

3. *Terms of Atonement.*—The more special terms of atonement, as previously given, are atonement itself, reconciliation, propitiation, redemption, and the appropriated RECTORAL AND  
PERSONAL DIS-  
PLEASURE. term substitution. All these terms have a proper interpretation in the governmental theory. As an expression of the office and results of the redemptive mediation of Christ they are properly rectoral terms. Yet in a deeper sense they imply the personal displeasure of God against sinners, and a change in his personal regard in actual reconciliation. Now they are no longer held

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xviii, 25; Psa. xlviii, 10; Dan. ix, 7; Rom. i, 17; Rev. xvi, 5.



in reprobation, but accepted in a loving friendship. Yet the atoning sacrifice of Christ neither appeases the personal displeasure of God nor conciliates his personal friendship. This appears in the fact that, although the subjects of reconciliation in the death of Christ, yet as sinners we are none the less under the personal displeasure of God, and so continue until, on our repentance and faith, there is an actual reconciliation. The atonement, therefore, is in itself provisory. It renders us salvable consistently with the rectoral office of justice. But these personal regards of God respect man simply in his personal character, condemning him in his sinning, and accepting him in friendship on his repentance and obedience. Hence, these terms of atonement, while deeply implying the personal displeasure of God against sinners as such, represent the sufferings of Christ, not as appeasing such displeasure, nor as conciliating his personal favor, but as the ground of his judicial reconciliation; yet always and only on such conditions of a new spiritual life as to carry with his judicial reconciliation his personal reconciliation and friendship. Such is their true sense, and such is their interpretation in the governmental theory.

4. *Terms of Atoning Suffering.*—Any issue on these terms respects neither the intensity of the sufferings of Christ nor the fact of their atoning office, but the question whether they were in any proper sense penally retributive.

This may be noted first, that there is neither term nor text of Scripture which explicitly asserts the penal substitution of Christ in atonement for sin. It is a noteworthy THE ISSUE. fact; and the assertion of it will stand good until the contrary be shown. As a fact, it is against the theory of atonement by penal substitution and in favor of that by vicarious suffering. The punishment of Christ as substitute in atonement is rendered familiar by frequency of utterance in theological discussion; but this is the utterance of theology, not the assertion of Scripture. Exegesis often asserts the same thing; but this is interpretation, not the texts themselves. They neither require nor warrant the interpretation. Redemption by vicarious suffering, without the penal element, will give their proper meaning. Nor is there any term or text of Scripture expressive of the atoning suffering of Christ which this doctrine cannot freely appropriate in its deepest sense. Yet we do not think it necessary to review all the texts in question. It will suffice briefly to notice a few of the stronger.

“For he hath made him to be sin (*ἁμαρτίαν*) for us.”<sup>1</sup> A common rendering of the original is *sin-offering*. This has ample war-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v, 21.

rant, and avoids the insuperable difficulties attending any restriction to a primary or ethical sense of sin. That the Scriptures often use the original term in the sense of sin-offering there is no reason to question.<sup>1</sup> In the references given, after a description of the sin-offering, we have for it the simple phrase, “*ἁμαρτία ἐστίν*,” and so used several times; also, after the preceptive instruction respecting the daily sacrifice of atonement, we have the phrase, “*τὸ μυσχάρτον τὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ποιήσεις*,” the last two words being the very same used in the text under review. On *ἁμαρτία*, as used in the references given in Leviticus, Sophocles says that “it is equivalent to *θυσία περὶ ἁμαρτίας*.”<sup>2</sup> Thus we have in Scripture usage ample warrant for rendering the same term in the text under review as *sin-offering*. Nor do we thereby surrender any vital truth or fact of atonement. Christ is all the same a sacrifice for sin.

If this rendering be denied, what then? Will sin be held in any strictly ethical sense, or under any legitimate definition of sin proper? Certainly not. Christ could not so be made sin. No one who can analyze the terms and take their import will so maintain. Sin must still be subject to interpretation. Shall the rendering be the turpitude or demerit of sin? Even satisfactionists must discard this, as they deny the possibility of its transference. Shall it be the guilt of sin? This some will allege. But guilt as a punishable reality cannot be separated from sin as a concrete fact in the person of a sinner. Only punishment remains as a possible rendering. But here is a like difficulty, that sin as punishable is untransferable.

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse (*κατάρα*) for us: for it is written, Cursed (*Ἐπικατάρατος*) is every one that hangeth on a tree.”<sup>3</sup> The more literal sense is obvious, and is specially emphasized by the citation in the text. Nor would we conceal or avoid any force of the terms used. The curse of the law on us, and from which Christ redeems us, is the law’s condemnation and the imminence of its penalty. And he redeems us by being made a curse for us in his crucifixion. But in what sense a curse? In the literal sense of the terms, and as emphasized by the quotation? This in the Hebrew text is, “for he that is hanged is accursed of God.”<sup>4</sup>

The doctrine of satisfaction requires this full sense. If the curse is the divine punishment of sin, then whoever is so punished is

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxix, 14, 36; Lev. iv, 24; v, 9; Hos. iv, 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iii, 13.

<sup>4</sup> Deut. xxi, 23.

accursed of God. So, if our sins were thus punished in Christ, then was he accursed of God. Will the doctrine of satisfaction hold the literal sense, with its inevitable implications? Only in a sense consistent with the facts in the case is he that hangeth on a tree the subject of a divine curse. In many instances the most holy and beloved of the Father have been so executed. They were not accursed of God. And along with the fact of the divine malediction we must ever take the criminality of the subject. As such, and only as such, is any one accursed of God. Thus it is written of odious criminals, executed for their crimes and then exposed in suspension upon a tree, that they are accursed of God.

Was Christ so accursed? Did the malediction of God fall upon him in his crucifixion as upon a criminal in the expiation of his sins under a judicial punishment? We must depart from such a sense of this text. Its implications in the case of our Lord and Saviour would be violative of all truth and fact, and repugnant to all true Christian sentiment. We never again can go back to Luther's shocking exposition of the text; which, however, is in the order of its more literal sense, and within the limit of its inevitable implications. And that Christ in our redemption submitted to a manner of death which, as the punishment of heinous crime, was in the deepest sense an accursed death, will without the curse and wrath of God on him, or any penal element in his suffering, answer for all the requirements of a proper exegesis.<sup>1</sup>

“Who his own self bare our sins, τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν, in his own body on the tree.” The apostle no doubt had in mind the words of the prophet uttered in his marvelous prevision of the redemptive work of Christ.<sup>2</sup> Hence the two passages here stand together. They are much in the style and sense of those previously considered. That they fully mean the fact of an atonement for sin in the vicarious suffering of Christ there is no reason to question. And but for the insuperable difficulties previously stated, we might admit an element of penal substitution; but the texts neither assert nor require it. Nor will the doctrine of satisfaction appropriate the terms literally. Let it put upon “our sins” any proper definition according to the literal sense, and then answer to the question, whether Christ really bore them in his own body on the tree? It will not answer affirmatively. From such a sense the strongest doctrine of penal substitution will now turn aside, and proceed to an interpretation in accord with its more moderate views.

<sup>1</sup> Wood: Works. vol. iv, p. 72; Barnes: *The Atonement*, pp. 294-296.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. ii, 24.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. liii, 4-12.

As previously stated, we have in these texts the fact of an atone-  
FULLY APPRO-  
PRIATED. ment for sin in vicarious suffering. This fact justifies  
 the use of their strongest terms of substitution, and answers for their interpretation. With the sufferings and death of Christ as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness and salvation, we can most freely and fully appropriate them. Nor do we need the penal element for such appropriation. And on no other doctrine than on that which we maintain can it be said of Christ more truly, or with deeper emphasis, that "he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed:" "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."

#### V. THEORY AND SCRIPTURE FACTS.

There are a few special facts, clearly scriptural and with decisive bearing on the nature of the atonement, which may be noted here. They will be found witnessing for the theory which we maintain, and against that in special issue with it.

1. *Guilt of Redeemed Sinners.*—It is an obvious fact both of the Scriptures and of the reason of the case, that all sinners are under divine condemnation and guilt. There is no exception in favor of elect sinners, whose sins are alleged to have suffered merited punishment in Christ as substitute in penalty. The divine law condemns all alike; the penalty of justice threatens all alike.

Why should this be true of any one whose sins have suffered merited punishment in Christ as his accepted substitute? It cannot be true. Whoever suffers the just punishment of his own sins is thereafter as free from guilt or answerableness in penalty as though he had not sinned. If such punishment be possible and actual by substitution, the same consequence must follow. And we have previously shown, by quotations from the highest authorities on the doctrine of satisfaction, that justice itself imperatively requires the discharge of all sinners, the just punishment of whose sins Christ has suffered in their behalf. And the discharge must take place at once. Indeed, guilt is never actualized in them. The punishment anticipates their sin. Then so must their justification or discharge. And all that is said respecting the requirement of proper conditions, or the divine determination when the discharge shall issue, is either irrelevant or inconsistent, and therefore nugatory. Guilt and punishment are specific facts. The penalty of justice once inflicted, the subject is free. And on the theory of satisfaction redeemed sinners can no more be answerable in penalty for their sins at any time

than Christ as their substitute could be answerable again for the same after he has once suffered their merited punishment. "So far as the guilt of an act—in other words, its obligation to punishment—is concerned, if the transgressor, or his *accepted* substitute, has endured the infliction that is set over against it, the law is satisfied, and the obligation to punishment is discharged."<sup>1</sup> This is consistent, and to the point.

The illogical jumbling which asserts an atonement for sin by actual penal substitution, and then makes it over into a kind of deposit, to be drawn upon or dispensed at the option of the depository, and that may be utterly refused to any and all, should be discarded. It is in utter contrariety to the Reformed soteriology, into which the doctrine of satisfaction by penal substitution is so deeply wrought, as it is to that doctrine itself. Yet we often meet this very jumbling. Here is a specimen: "God is under no obligation to make an atonement for the sin of the world; and, *after he has made one, he is at perfect liberty to apply it to whom he pleases, or not to apply it at all.* The atonement is *his*, and he may do what he will with his own."<sup>2</sup> We have no adverse criticism, except upon what is so palpably inconsistent with the doctrine of satisfaction, and with the citation just before given from the same author and taken from the same discussion. Whenever the payment of a debt is accepted, and from whomsoever, the debtor is free. Whenever a sin is justly punished, and in whomsoever, the sinner is free. Any detention, either in punishment or in liability to it, is an injustice. And the atonement of satisfaction is not a deposit which may go to the payment of our debt of guilt, but the actual payment; not something that may be accounted to us for the punishment of our sins, but their actual punishment. The making of such an atonement is the application of it. And now to represent it as a deposit that may be drawn upon—to write of its optional application, and of its rightful refusal to any or to all—is to jumble egregiously.

It is still a fact of the Scriptures, as also of the reason of the case, that sinners as such, though the subjects of redemption, are in a state of guilt. It is a fact contrary to the theory of satisfaction and in its disproof, as we have previously shown. But the atonement in substituted suffering, not in substituted punishment, and a provisory ground of forgiveness, not only agrees with such a fact, but requires it. Therefore, as the only alternative to the doctrine of satisfaction for a real atonement in Christ, the fact of guilt in redeemed sinners witnesses

<sup>1</sup> Shedd : *Theological Essays*, pp. 300, 301.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 314.

with all the force of its logic to the truth of the governmental theory.

2. *Forgiveness in Justification.*—As sin in the redeemed has real guilt, and no less so on account of the redemption, therefore justification, whatever else it may be, must include an actual forgiveness of sin. There must be a discharge from guilt as then real, a remission of penalty as then imminent. There is such a forgiveness. Nor is it really questioned, except for the exigency of a system, by truly evangelical minds. The Scriptures are full of it. It is in all the warnings against impending wrath; in all the urgent entreaties to repentance and salvation; in all the requirement and urgency of faith as the necessary condition of justification; in the deep sense of guilt and peril realized in a true conviction for sin; in the earnest prayer springing from such distress of conscience, and importuning the mercy of heaven; in the peace and joy of soul when the prayer is answered and the Spirit witnesses to a gracious adoption. Justification is not merely the information, given at the time of such experience, of a discharge from guilt long before achieved through the merited punishment of sin in a substitute. As up to this time the guilt is real, so the forgiveness is real. And it is much against the theory of satisfaction that it cannot give us a true doctrine of forgiveness in justification. But the doctrine which we maintain encounters no such objection. Such an atonement, while a sufficient ground of forgiveness, leaves all the guilt with the sinner until his justification by faith. Then his sins are really forgiven. So witness the Scriptures; and so witnesses many a happy experience.

3. *Grace in Forgiveness.*—The satisfactionist thinks his own doctrine pre-eminently one of grace. Is it such in the forgiveness of sin? This is the special point we make here. Forgiveness is in the very nature of it an act of grace. That the divine forgiveness in our justification is such an act the Scriptures fully testify. Still, it is true that a debt paid, and by whomsoever, is not forgiven; that a penalty inflicted, and upon whomsoever, is not remitted. And let it be remembered that the absolute irremissibility of penalty is the ground-principle in the theory of satisfaction.

But since the economy of redemption is of God; since it originated in his infinite love; and since he provided the sacrifice in atonement for sin, is not his grace in forgiveness free and full? So the satisfactionist reasons. Nor would we abate aught of the love of God in human redemption. There is infinite grace in his forgiveness of sin; but on the doctrine of atonement which we maintain, and not on that of satisfaction. If a

GRACE EX-  
CLUDED.

doctrine is constructed, as that of satisfaction, in the fullest recognition of a distinction of persons in the divine Trinity, and also of the specific part of each in the economy of human salvation, then it must not, for any after-exigency, ignore or suppress such distinction. If in the atonement, and as the only possible atonement, the Father inflicted the merited punishment of sin upon the Son, and the Son endured the punishment so inflicted, then they fulfill distinct offices in redemption. Yet the fact is often ignored or suppressed, in order to defend the doctrine of satisfaction against the objection that it denies to the Father a gracious forgiveness of sin. If, in the obligation of an absolute retributive justice the Father must inflict merited punishment upon sin, and if in the atonement he inflicted such punishment upon his Son as the substitute of sinners, then he does not remit the penalty. No dialectics can identify such infliction with remission. And where there is no remission of penalty there can be no grace of forgiveness. Hence, the doctrine of satisfaction does not admit the grace of the Father in forgiveness; which fact of grace, however, is clearly given in the Scriptures.

But this great fact of grace is in full accord with the governmental theory. A provisory atonement in substituted suffering, rendering forgiveness consistent with the rectoral office of justice, yet in itself abating nothing of the guilt of sin, as its punishment must, gives place for a real and gracious forgiveness. There is a real forgiveness in our justification, and an infinite grace of the Father therein. And the rectoral theory, agreeing with these facts so decisive of the nature of redemptive substitution, and the only theory of a real atonement so agreeing, gives us the true doctrine.

REALITY OF  
THE GRACE.

4. *Universality of Atonement.*—We have previously noted the fact that the doctrine of satisfaction requires, on the ground of consistency, a limited atonement; and also that its universality, as given in the Scriptures, disproves the theory. But the governmental theory is consistent with the universality of the atonement, with a real conditionality of its saving grace, and with the fact that the subjects of redemption may reject its overtures of mercy and perish. It is the only theory of a real atonement in accord with these facts, and, therefore, the true one.

5. *Universal Overture of Grace.*—Who will hesitate in such an overture? Who will question its obligation? But without a universal atonement the offer would be made to many for whom there is no grace of forgiveness; hence there could be no such obligation. And if the atonement be for all, it must be of a nature to

render its universality consistent with all the facts of soteriology. It is such only in the rectoral theory.

6. *Doctrinal Result.*—The fact of a real atonement in Christ is with the satisfaction and governmental theories. Hence the question of its nature is between them. We appeal it to the decision of the facts given in this section. Here are five scriptural facts, all prominent in soteriology, and all vitally concerning the very nature of the atonement. They are inconsistent with the doctrine of satisfaction, but in full accord with the rectoral theory. They require such an atonement, and, therefore, certify its truth.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## SUFFICIENCY OF THE ATONEMENT.

THE substitution of Christ in suffering answers for an atonement through a revelation of such moral truths as give the highest ruling power to the divine law. It must, therefore, embody such facts as will make the necessary revelation. Only thus can the atonement have sufficiency. It is proper, therefore, that we specially note some of these facts of atoning value. Authors differ somewhat respecting them.<sup>1</sup> This may arise, at least in part, from a difference in the doctrine. The vital facts are clear in the light of Scripture.

## I. THE HOLINESS OF CHRIST.

1. *A Necessary Element.*—A criminal cannot be a proper mediator. Whoever dishonors himself and the law by his own transgression is thereby disqualified for the office of mediation in behalf of a criminal. If human government does not require moral perfection for such office, still, the mediator must not be amenable to penalty on his own account. And the higher his personal righteousness and moral worth, the more valuable will be his mediation as the ground of forgiveness. As a mediation, so accepted, must inculcate respect for law and enforce obedience to its requirements, so, much depends upon the moral worth of the mediator. And Christ, in the atonement, must be without sin and clear of all its penal liabilities. He must be personally holy.<sup>2</sup>

2. *Scripture View.*—The Scriptures record, and with frequent repetition, the sinlessness of Christ, and ever hold the fact in vital connection with his redeeming work. It is emphasized as fitting and necessary in the atonement, and also as an element of special value.<sup>3</sup> In all the force of its own worth it is a revelation of the truths and motives which constitute the best efficiencies of moral government. The vicarious sacrifice of the sinless Christ as the sole ground of forgiveness sequesters the divine law with a ruling efficiency, with a majesty of holiness, far above all that the power of

<sup>1</sup> Jenkyn : *The Extent of the Atonement*, chap. ii ; Bruce : *The Humiliation of Christ*, p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> Ullman : *The Sinlessness of Jesus*, pp. 259-261 ; Robert Hall : *On Substitution*, Works, vol. i, p. 269.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. v, 21 ; Heb. vii, 26 ; 1 Pet. iii, 18 ; 1 John iii, 5.

punishment can achieve. Also his holiness gives its grace to all other elements of value in the atonement.

## II. HIS GREATNESS.

1. *An Element of Atoning Value.*—Whoever needs the service of a mediator is concerned to find one of the highest character and rank attainable. The minister of the law vested with the pardoning power is officially concerned therein. For the value of the mediation is not in its personal influence with him, but from its rectoral relations. He may already be personally disposed to clemency, but lacks a proper ground for its exercise, so that law shall not suffer in its honor and authority. Such ground is furnished in the greatness and rank of the mediator. And the higher these qualities, the more complete is the ground of forgiveness, or the more effective the support of law in all its rectoral offices. There is a philosophy in these facts, as manifest in our previous discussions. Beyond this, the case may be appealed to the common judgment.

There is the same principle in the redemptive mediation of Christ. His greatness and rank go into his atonement as an element of the highest value. The Scriptures fully recognize and reveal the fact. It is with accordant reason and design that they so frequently and explicitly connect his greatness and rank with his redeeming work.

2. *An Infinite Value in Christ.*—In the Scriptures, to which reference was just now made as connecting the greatness of Christ with his redemptive mediation, he is revealed as the Son of God and essentially divine; as in the form of God and equal with him in glory; as the Creator and Ruler of all things; as Lord of the angels.<sup>1</sup> In him, therefore, divinity itself mediates in the redemption of man. Thus an infinite greatness and rank give rectoral support to the law of God in the ministry of forgiveness to repenting sinners. This is a fact of infinite sufficiency in the atonement of Christ.

## III. HIS VOLUNTARINESS.

1. *A Necessary Fact.*—The injustice of a coerced substitution of one in place of another would deprive it of all benefit in atonement for sin. But when the sacrifice is in the free choice of the substitute, its voluntariness not only gives full place to every other element of atoning value, but is itself such an element.

2. *Christ a Voluntary Substitute.*—On this fact the Scriptures leave us no reason for any question. And the frequency and full-

<sup>1</sup> John 1, 1-3, 14; Phil. ii, 6-8; Col. i, 14-17; Heb. i, 2, 3.

ness of their utterances respecting the freedom of Christ in the work of redemption give to that freedom all the certainty and significance which its truth requires. It is true that the Father gave the Son ; that he sent him to be the Saviour of the world ; that he spared him not, but delivered him up for us all ; that he prepared for him a body for his priestly sacrifice in atonement for sin : but it is none the less true that in all this the mind of the Son was at one with the mind of the Father ; that he freely and gladly chose the incarnation in order to our redemption ; that he loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God ; that, with full power over his own life, he freely surrendered it in our redemption. And the fact of this freedom is carried back of his incarnation and atoning suffering to the Son in his essential divinity and in his glory with the Father.<sup>1</sup>

3. *The Atoning Value.*—The voluntariness of Christ crowns with its grace all the marvelous facts of his redeeming work. His atoning sacrifice, while in the purest free-willing, was at once in an infinite beneficence toward us, and in an infinite filial love and obedience toward his Father. And the will of the Father, in obedience to which the sacrifice is made, so far from limiting its atoning worth, provides for its highest sufficiency by opening such a sphere for the beneficence and filial obedience of the Son. Both have infinite moral worth with the Father. So he regards them, not in any commercial valuation, but as intrinsically good. Now forgiveness on such a ground is granted only on account of what is most precious with God, and therefore a vindication of his justice and holiness, of his rectoral honor and authority, in the salvation of repenting souls.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV. HIS DIVINE SONSHIP.

1. *Sense of Atoning Value.*—The nearer a mediator stands in the relations of friendship to an offended person the more persuasive will his intercession be. But this is a matter of mere personal influence, not of rectoral service. The person offended is regarded simply in his personal disposition, not as a minister of the law, with the obligations of his office ; and, so far, the case has more affinity with the satisfaction theory than with the governmental. According to this theory God needs no vicarious sacrifice for his personal propitiation. His need is for some provision which will render the forgiveness of sin consistent with his own honor and authority as moral Ruler, and with the good of his subjects. Hence, while we find an element of atoning value in the divine Sonship of

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xl, 6-8 ; John x, 17, 18 ; Phil. ii, 6-8 ; Heb. x, 5-9.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Hall : *On Substitution*, Works, vol. i, p. 269

Christ, we find it not in a matter of personal influence with the Father, but on a principle of rectoral service. This value lies in the moral worth which the Sonship of Christ gives to his redeeming work in the appreciation of the Father. The nature of it will further appear under the next heading.

2. *Measure of Value.*—The divine filiation of the Redeemer furnishes an element of great value in the atonement. This may be illustrated in connection with two facts of his Sonship.

The divine filiation of the Redeemer is original and singular. It is such as to be the ground of the Father's infinite love to his Son. On nothing are the Scriptures more explicit than on the fact of this love. Therein we have the ground of the Father's infinite appreciation of the redeeming work of the Son. And the truth returns, that forgiveness is granted only on the ground of what is most precious with the Father. By all this preciousness, as revealed in the light of the Father's love to the Son, his redemptive mediation, as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness, gives utterance to the authority of the divine law, and the obligation of its maintenance; to the sacredness of moral rights and interests, and the imperative requirement of their protection; to the evil of sin, and the urgency of its restriction. These are the very facts which give the highest and best ruling power to the divine law. And thus we have an element of sufficiency in the atonement.

The redeeming love of God toward us is most clearly seen in the light of his love for his own Son. Only in this view do we read the meaning of its divine utterances.<sup>1</sup> Why did the Father sacrifice the Son of his love in our redemption? It could not have been from any need of personal propitiation toward us. The redeeming sacrifice, itself the fruit of his love to us, is proof to the contrary. He gave his Son to die for us that he might reach us in the grace of forgiveness and salvation. Why then did he so sacrifice the Son of his love? The only reason lies in the moral interests concerned, and which, in the case of forgiveness, required an atonement in their protection. But for his regard for these rights and interests, and, therefore, for the sacredness and authority of his law as the necessary means of their protection, he might have satisfied the yearnings of his compassion toward us in a mere administrative forgiveness. This he could not do consistently with either his goodness or his rectoral obligation. And rather than surrender the interests which his law must protect he delivers up his own Son to suffering and death. Therefore, in this

GROUND OF  
THE FATHER'S  
LOVE.

REVELATION  
OF HIS LOVE  
TO US.

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 16; Rom. viii, 32; 1 John iv, 10.

great sacrifice—ininitely great because of his love for his Son, and therein so revealed—in this great sacrifice, and with all the emphasis of its greatness, God makes declaration of an infinite regard for the interests and ends of his moral government, and of an immutable purpose to maintain them. This declaration, in all the force of its divine verities, goes to the support of his government, and gives the highest honor and ruling power to his law, while forgiveness is granted to repenting sinners.

## V. HIS HUMAN BROTHERHOOD.

1. *Mediation must Express an Interest.*—A stranger to a condemned person, and without reason for any special interest in his case, could not be accepted as a mediator in his behalf. A pardon granted on such ground would, in respect of all ends of government, be the same as one granted on mere sovereignty. The case is clearly different when, on account of intimate relations of friendship, or other special reasons of interest, the mediation is an expression of profound sympathy. Forgiveness on such an intercession is granted, not for any thing trivial or indifferent, and so evincing an indifference to the law, but only for what is regarded as real, and a sufficient justification of the forgiveness. This gives support to law. It loses nothing of respect in the common judgment, nothing of its ruling force. And the profounder the sympathy of the mediator, the greater is the rectoral service of his mediation as the ground of forgiveness.

2. *The Principle in Atonement.*—Christ appropriates the principle by putting himself into the most intimate relation with us. In the incarnation he clothes himself in our nature, partakes of our flesh and blood, and enters into brotherhood with us.<sup>1</sup> Herein is the reality and the revelation of a profound interest in his mediation. The love and sympathy of this brotherhood he carries into the work of atonement. They are voiced in his tears and sorrows, in the soul agonies of Gethsemane, in the bitter outcries of Calvary, and are still voiced in his intercessory prayers in heaven. Men and angels, in a spontaneous moral judgment, pronounce such a mediation a sufficient ground of forgiveness, and vindicate the divine administration therein. No shadow falls upon the divine rectitude. The divine law suffers no dishonor nor loss of ruling power. Thus the human brotherhood of Christ gives sufficiency to his atonement.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John i, 14; Gal. iv, 4, 5; Heb. ii, 11, 14-16.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Hall: *On Substitution*, Works, vol. i, p. 270.

## VI. HIS SUFFERING.

1. *Extreme Views.*—In one view the suffering of Christ contains, in respect of our guilt or forgiveness, the whole atoning value. Only substitutional punishment so atones, and this just in the measure of the penal suffering endured. “This hypothesis measures the atonement not only by the number of the elect, but by the intensity and degree of the suffering to be endured for their sin. It adjusts the dimensions of the atonement to a nice mathematical point, and poises its infinite weight of glory even to the small dust of a balance. I need not say that the hand which stretches such lines, and holds such scales, is a bold one. Such a calculation represents the Son of God as giving so much suffering for so much value received in the souls given to him; and represents the Father as dispensing so many favors and blessings for so much value received in obedience and sufferings. This is the commercial atonement—the commercial redemption, with which supralapsarian theology degrades the Gospel and fetters its ministers; which sums up the worth of a stupendous moral transaction with arithmetic, and with its little span limits what is infinite.”<sup>1</sup> This is the atonement by equal, as well as by identical, penalty. It is really the atonement by equivalent penalty, which varies the case by the admission of a less degree of penal suffering, but only on account of its higher value arising from the rank of the substitute, while an absolute justice receives full satisfaction in behalf of the elect. Such a doctrine has no lofty grandeur nor profound philosophy. It voids the grace of God in forgiveness. This is one extreme.

In another view, it is denied that the suffering of Christ, especially in the facts subsequent to the incarnation, is essential to the atonement. The author just cited purposely omits “intensity of suffering” as a necessary element of atonement, and does not hesitate to assert that the incarnation of the Son of God is in itself an act of such condescension in behalf of sinners that, as the only ground of forgiveness, it is a higher revelation of the divine justice than could be made by their eternal subjection to the merited punishment of sin. Such is the other extreme.

2. *A Necessary Element.*—We are not honoring the divine love by an affected exaltation of one fact, however stupendous, in the work of human redemption. Nor should we omit, as a necessary element, what the Scriptures account to the atonement as the vital fact of its sufficiency. That the sufferings of Christ are so vital

<sup>1</sup> Jenkyn: *The Extent of the Atonement*, pp. 27, 28.

is clear from many texts previously cited or given by reference. They are even essential to the atoning service of other elements of sufficiency. The holiness, greatness, voluntariness, divine Sonship, and human brotherhood of Christ are, in themselves, but qualities of fitness for his redemptive mediation, and enter as elements of sufficiency into the atonement only as he enters into his sufferings. Without his sufferings and death there is really no atonement. This is the truth of Scripture.

3. *An Infinite Sufficiency.*—The sufferings of Christ, which go into the atonement as a revelation of God in his regard for the principles and ends of his moral government, and in his immutable purpose to maintain them, give to it an infinite sufficiency. We cannot fathom these sufferings. We get the deeper sounding only as we hold them in association with the greatness and rank of Christ himself.

The incarnation itself is a great fact of atoning value in the redemptive mediation of Christ. This is clear in our doctrine, however difficult it may be for that of satisfaction so to appropriate it. It must go into such an atonement, if at all, either as a vicarious punishment or as a fact of vicarious righteousness. The theory finds atonement in nothing else. Now the incarnation itself could not be a fact of penal substitution, because it could not be a punishment. Could it be a fact of vicarious obedience, and imputable to the elect? We know not the Scripture exegesis nor the philosophy of the fact which can so interpret it. It is not such because a fact of obedience. The subordination of the Son puts all his acts, even those of creation and providence, into the sphere of filial obedience. And we might as well account these acts an imputable personal righteousness in atonement for the elect as so to account his obedience in the free choice of the incarnation. So difficult, if not absolutely impossible, is it for the doctrine of satisfaction to appropriate the great fact of the incarnation as an element of atonement. Our doctrine has no difficulty in the appropriation. We require it to be neither a fact of penal substitution nor one of imputable personal righteousness. It goes into the atonement as one of the great facts of condescension and sacrifice in the work of redemption.

The humiliation of Christ in the incarnation thus becomes a great fact of sufficiency in the atonement. His condescension to the form of an angel would have been much. How infinitely more the actual condescension! There are two marvelous facts: the self-emptying—*ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσε*—or self-divestment of a rightful glory in equality with God, and an assumption, instead,

of the form of a servant in the likeness of men.<sup>1</sup> The Son of God, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person,<sup>2</sup> and dwelling in the glory of the Father,<sup>3</sup> condescends to the plane of humanity, and dwells here in the likeness of sinful flesh.<sup>4</sup>

The incarnation is not the limit of the humiliation and sacrifice of Christ: "And being found in fashion as a man, he  
LOWER DEPTH. humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."<sup>5</sup> What scenes are disclosed in Gethsemane and on Calvary! Burdens of sorrow, depths of woe, intensities of agony! An awful mystery of suffering! At such a cost the Saviour redeems the world.

Nor have we the truest, deepest sense of the sufferings of Christ, except in the fact that he endured them as the *Theanthropos*.  
THE SUFFERER. With the doctrine of a union of the divine and human natures in a unity of personality in Christ, and that in the incarnation he was truly the *God-man*, we know not either the theology or philosophy which may limit his sufferings to a mere human consciousness. With the impassivity of his divine nature in the incarnation and atonement, many texts of Scripture, fraught with infinite treasures of grace and love, would be little more than meaningless words.<sup>6</sup> On such a principle their exegesis would be superficial and false to their infinitely deeper meaning. The divine Son incarnate, and so incarnate in human nature as to unite it with himself in personal unity, could suffer, and did suffer in the redemption of the world.<sup>7</sup>

Such are the facts which combine in the atonement, and, on the principles previously explained, give to it an infinite sufficiency. They are God's revelation of himself in his moral government, for the vindication of his justice and law in the ministry of forgiveness, for the restraint of sin, and for the protection of the rights and interests of his subjects. So much has he done, and so much required, that forgiveness might be consistent with these great ends. And now while on such ground, but only on such, repenting souls are forgiven and saved, he omits no judicial requirement, and surrenders no right nor interest either of himself or his subjects.

<sup>1</sup> Phil. ii, 6, 7.    <sup>2</sup> Heb. i, 3.    <sup>3</sup> John xvii, 5.    <sup>4</sup> Rom. viii, 3.    <sup>5</sup> Phil. ii, 8.

<sup>6</sup> Acts xx, 28; Rom. viii, 32; Phil. ii, 6-11; Col. i, 13-17; Heb. i, 3; ii, 9, 14-18; Rev. i, 5, 6; v, 6-13.

<sup>7</sup> Shedd: *Theological Essays*, p. 272; Raymond: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 275-282.



## CHAPTER IX.

## OBJECTIONS TO THE ATONEMENT.

WE must not omit all notice of the stock objections to the atonement. Yet they have little relevancy as against the doctrine which we maintain, and, therefore, require no elaborate refutation.

## I. AN IRRATIONAL SCHEME.

Opponents of fundamental Christian truth are strong on the rational, and especially on the irrational. A glance of their marvellous philosophic acumen detects the disconformity of a doctrine to reason. This is conclusive against it. Thus the atonement is summarily dismissed as an irrational scheme.

1. *A Pretentious Assumption.*—Such an objection little becomes the limitation of human reason. In our own resources we but feebly grasp the principles and requirements of divine moral government, and, therefore, cannot pronounce against either a necessity for the atonement, or the wisdom of its measures, or the beneficence of its results. Human reason, all-unequal to its devising, is all-incompetent to a conclusive judgment against it. And while with us the government of a municipality is still a perplexing problem, we do but arrogantly pronounce against the wisdom of the atonement in the infinitely broader sphere of divine moral government. The more certainly is this true since the deliverances of the highest reason accord to the economy of redemption in Christ an infinite excellence and wisdom.

2. *Analogies of Providence a Vindication.*—If the scheme of atonement is in analogy to the general course of providence, the fact wholly voids this objection, except on the broad ground that the general course of providence is irrational. But such an assumption would bar all title to a respectful hearing on the part of any one professing faith in Christianity, or even in God.

The vicarious principle is the most common law of human society in every form of its constitution.<sup>1</sup> And it is no arbitrary appointment, but springs inevitably from the VICARIOUS PRINCIPLE. providential relations of human life. In the family, in society, in the commonwealth one serves another, suffers for another. One

<sup>1</sup> Butler: *Analogy of Religion*, part ii, chap. v.

takes upon himself labor and suffering on account of the sin of another, averts evil from him, and brings him good. Here is the vicarious principle. Human life is full of it.

Such is the mediation of Christ in vicarious suffering. Nor is the principle really changed by the fact that his sufferings meet a special exigency of moral government in order to the forgiveness and salvation of sinners. Any objection respecting the justice of the case will be met elsewhere, and really is not pertinent here, because this exigency of moral government is met in the mediation of Christ by vicarious suffering, not by substituted punishment. Only the latter element could carry the atonement out of such analogy to very many vicarious facts of human life as to deny it the vindication of that analogy. And neither revelation, nor the general course of providence, nor reason itself, pronounces the scheme of vicarious atonement irrational.

## II. A VIOLATION OF JUSTICE.

No objection has been urged either more violently or persistently against the atonement than this. A few words, however, will answer for all the defense required of us.

1. *No Infringement of Rights.*—Injustice comes with the refusal of dues, with the deprivation of lawful possessions or inalienable rights, with wrongful injury or unmerited punishment, not otherwise. Such facts are a violation of justice, because a violation of rights. Without this there can be no injustice. On this ground we have an easy answer to the objection of injustice in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. Others may answer for their own doctrine.

2. *Analogy of Vicarious Suffering.*—Men often endure toil and suffering, and jeopard life itself in behalf of others. They do this electively, cheerfully, not of coercion. Do they suffer any violation of rights thereby? Is any injustice done them? Does their own reason or the common moral judgment so pronounce? Surely not. Indeed, both approve such vicarious sacrifice, and reprehend its refusal on proper exigency.

3. *The Atonement Clear of Injustice.*—That the vicarious sufferings of Christ meet a special requirement of moral government in order to our forgiveness and salvation introduces no element of injustice. Nor did Christ, in all his relations to the will of the Father respecting the deepest sufferings which he endured, ever evince any sense of injury or wrong. Nor was there any wrong to him: for, while he so suffered in obedience to the will of the Father, it was none the less his own election in the purest freedom. And

it is no punishment of one for the sin of another. Therefore all injustice is excluded.

4. *Vantage-ground against the Moral Theory.*—This is a common objection with those who maintain the moral theory of atonement. We claim a position of the highest advantage against them. They admit the sufferings and death of Christ as consequent upon his redemptive mission, and as for men in this sense. They admit the severity of his sufferings and the shameful manner of his death. But, on their scheme, his extreme suffering is only incidental to his saving work, while on ours it is the necessary ground of forgiveness and salvation. Therefore our doctrine will vindicate such a divine economy, while theirs will not.

The real problem is in such suffering of the innocent in behalf of the guilty. “State this fact as indeterminately as you please; rigidly adhere to the coldest and most undefin-<sup>THE PROBLEM.</sup>ing forms of language; allow only that the innocent suffered for the advantage of the guilty; what possible abatement of the charge of injustice do you supply? The difficulty, if any—the mystery, the awful mystery—remains in full proportion behind the flimsy cloud. That mystery is, the innocent, the virtuous, the perfect One, has borne tremendous agony. This is the point of startling wonder, whatever the result: of wonder to be diminished only by the exigency, the mighty good accruing, not otherwise to be attained.”<sup>1</sup> The profound exigency is the vindicatory fact. Intense vicarious suffering, arising in a specially providential economy, and without a sufficient reason in attainable good, is of impossible defense. Such is the case with the moral view. But the doctrine of a real atonement in Christ, with the necessity of his redemptive sufferings as the means of salvation, and the infinite good attained, gives us the clearest and fullest theodicy.

### III. A RELEASEMENT FROM DUTY.

This objection, if intelligently and honestly made, must have in view some particular doctrine of atonement. Otherwise it has neither pertinence nor force, whatever weight logical validity would give it.

1. *Fatal, if Valid.*—No doctrine of atonement could stand against such an objection if grounded in truth. But duty has no surer ground, and no more imperative behest respecting all that constitutes the highest moral and religious worth, than in the atonement itself. Hence any doctrine really open to such an objection must be in error. Nor will the history of doctrines permit

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert: *The Christian Atonement*, p. 93.

the assertion that no one has been so open. Antinomianism itself has a place in that history. And any commercial theory, or doctrine of atonement by absolute substitution in precept and penalty, is logically open to this objection, however its advocates disclaim the implication. A punishment so endured for us, and a righteousness so wrought on our account, cannot again be required of us under any claim of justice or sanction of law. But the doctrine which we maintain is not answerable in such a case.

2. *Nugatory against the True Doctrine.*—On a true doctrine the atonement in Christ is simply the ground of forgiveness, not the merited punishment of sin. Hence we are guilty all the same, though now with the privilege of forgiveness and salvation. And for such a result through redemptive grace there is required a true repentance for sin and a true faith in Christ; and, as the condition of his continued favor, a true obedience to his will. A measure of forgiveness in behalf of rebels would surely be no discharge from the obligation and requirement of future loyalty, and especially when the continuance of the restored franchise is conditioned on fidelity in future loyalty. Such are the facts respecting the atonement. And in all its truth and lesson it makes duty specially imperative and responsible, and presses its claim with a weight of obligation and a power of motive peculiar to itself. It is, therefore, wholly and forever clear of this objection.

#### IV. AN ASPERSION OF DIVINE GOODNESS.

This, also, must have in view some special doctrine of atonement. Otherwise, it is so manifestly groundless that it can hardly be a mere fallacy, and must be a sophistry; not a mere error in its logic, but an intentional error.

1. *Reason of Law and Penalty.*—Whence comes law? And wherefore penalty? Is their origin in the cruelty of rulers? Is revengefulness the moving impulse of legislators and ministers of law? Is vindictiveness the inspiration of punishment? Is implacableness the sole restraint of the pardoning power? No man can think so. The public good requires both law and penalty. Here is their source. This fact does not give us the highest principles of divine moral government, yet has enough analogy for illustration. Rulers in human government, if by personal qualities well fitted for their office, cherish infinitely higher sentiments than the present objection would imply in application to them. With rulers of the highest and best qualities clemency would often release the criminal when the public good constrains his punishment. And they should have the honor of a wise and

beneficent administration rather than suffer the reproach of vindictiveness.

2. *No Aspersions of Divine Goodness.*—Now if the punitive ministries of justice imply no vindictiveness, but evince the wisdom and beneficence of government, how does the refusal of pardon so imply? Then how could the requirement of such provision as would render forgiveness consistent with the ends of government show any implacability? And then how does the atonement, as necessary to the consistency of forgiveness with the infinite interest of moral government, impeach the clemency of the divine Ruler, or asperse his goodness? When this is shown other questions may be asked. Until then they are not necessary.

3. *Divine Love Magnified.*—The atonement has its original in the divine love. Nor has it any other possible source. The human mind is powerless for the original conception of such a scheme. Nor could it have birth in the mind of angel or archangel, but in God only. And with him its primary impulse must arise in his love. It could not arise in any perfection of knowledge, or power, or justice, or holiness. There must be a profound sympathy with human woe. An infinite compassion must yearn over the miseries of sin. Love only can answer to such requirement. “God is love.”<sup>1</sup> Herein is the primary impulse of human redemption, and the ever-active force in all its infinite sacrifices. To this one source the Scriptures ever trace it.

And the divine love, so moving to an atonement for sin, must meet the sacrifices which it requires. These are infinitely great. A plan of human redemption must be adjusted to the profoundest interests of the moral universe. The infinite exigency reaches into heaven for the Son of the Father’s love. He must be the atoning sacrifice; he must be delivered up to humiliation and death. The divine love answers to the infinite exigency.<sup>2</sup> And while the cross stands as the symbol of the atonement, and it is written “God so loved the world,” that atonement casts no aspersion upon his clemency, but infinitely magnifies his love.

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv, 16.      <sup>2</sup> John iii, 16; Rom. v, 6-10; viii, 32; 1 John iv, 10.

## CHAPTER X.

## A LESSON FOR ALL INTELLIGENCES.

## I. RELATIONS OF THE ATONEMENT.

1. *A Salvation for Man Only.*—Speculative and fanciful minds, forgetting the verities of Scripture, may reach the thought not only of the sufficiency, but also of the actuality, of an atonement for moral beings other than men.<sup>1</sup> The Scriptures, however, limit it to the human race. Nor would any superabundance of its grace, nor any further prevalence of sin, warrant the inference of a wider extension. There are other orders under the power and curse of sin.<sup>2</sup> Here is the prostration of lofty powers, the corruption of once holy natures, and an awful lapse of moral beings from the highest happiness into the profoundest woe. Nor have they any power of self-recovery. There is, therefore, in their case all the need of redemption arising out of an utter moral ruin. Nor will the divine love allow the supposition that, however just their doom, they have fallen below the reach of its pity. Yet the Scriptures give no intimation of an atonement for them, but a contrary one. Christ becomes our brother by an incarnation in our nature that through death he might redeem us.<sup>3</sup> And we have this significant utterance of limitation: “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.”<sup>4</sup> The passage, viewed contextually and in its own terms, clearly limits redemption in its directness and actuality to the human race.

2. *Broader Relation to Moral Beings.*—An atonement in the sacrifice of Christ, while for man only, may yet have a lesson of profound moral truth for other and for all intelligences.<sup>5</sup> It is such a truth, and of such moral significance, that it must deeply interest all moral beings to whom a knowledge of it may come.

And the notion of a wide extension of such information is no conjecture, nor even a mere rational idea. Rational it is; for the atonement is too great a truth, and too broad and intimate in its relations, for any narrow limitation. The long preparation for the redeeming advent was known in heaven as on earth. Angels often appear amid the scenes of that preparation.

<sup>1</sup> As Origen did.   <sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. ii, 4; Jude 6.   <sup>3</sup> Heb. ii, 14, 15.   <sup>4</sup> Heb. ii, 16.

<sup>5</sup> Gilbert: *The Christian Atonement*, pp. 218–220, 352, 353.

The redeeming Lord comes forth from the midst of their adoring myriads. Many are with him in the lowly scenes of his humiliation, deeply interested in him and in his great work. They form his triumphal escort in the ascension, and all their hosts, in glad acclaim, welcome his return. Here are means and evidences of a widely extended knowledge of our redemption. And the fact of such a knowledge has a sure ground in the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup> The references given are sufficient for the point made, though there are many other texts and facts of like import.<sup>2</sup>

Nor need we have any perplexity respecting either the possibility or the means of such universal information. Moral beings, ever steadfast in holiness and obedience, cannot be in entire isolation, however remote their dwelling-places. They have a common center of union and intercourse in God, as the one Creator and Father of all. “What, then, can He who made them be at any loss how to instruct them? Does one sun dart his beams above, below, around, as well as upon a single spot of earth; and cannot the central light of God convey revelation to others as well as to us? Is there no angel to bear the news? no prophet among them to receive the inspiration? To them, then, as to principalities and powers in heavenly places, may be made known the manifold wisdom of God in the Church.”<sup>3</sup>

3. *A Practical Lesson for All.*—While, therefore, the lesson of the atonement surely opens its pages to the reading of all intelligences, the fact itself, and the great truths which it reveals, cannot fail profoundly to interest and impress all minds. A little attention will give us the facts for the full verification of this position.

Divine revelation makes known to us the existence of other orders of moral beings. With this knowledge, even reason hears, respecting each order, the one creative fiat of Godhead: “In our image, after our likeness.”<sup>4</sup> And, formed in the one image of God, they have a oneness of moral constitution. As made known in the Scriptures, they clearly have a moral nature like our own, and are, therefore, in the likeness of each other.

However numerous their orders or vast the scale of their gradations, yet, with a oneness of moral nature, they are one in moral motivity. The same divine truths which impress one may impress another, or that interest us may interest all. The soul of each is open to the practical revelation of

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iii, 10; 1 Pet. i, 12; Rev. v, 11–13.

<sup>2</sup> Chalmers: *Astronomical Discourses*, Discourse iv.

<sup>3</sup> Watson: *Sermons*, vol. i, p. 187. <sup>4</sup> Gen. i, 26.

God in his justice, holiness, and love; in his marvelous works of creation and providence; in his universal Fatherhood; in all the behests of his will.

The revelation of God and truth in the atonement may give to all their profoundest religious conceptions, and move them with a pathos of love and a power of moral influence above every other truth. In the marvelous adjustments of the infinite wisdom there cannot be wanting a masterly correlation of all moral natures to the grandest truth in the universe. All holy intelligences are open to the moral power of the cross.

## II. A LESSON OF UNIVERSAL INTEREST.

1. *Higher Orders Interested in Redemption.*—The facts of this interest might be appropriated to a further illustration of truths previously given. The nature of the interest as made known, the facts which it regards, and the measure of it, all signify a likeness of moral cognition and motivity to our own, and, therefore, a capacity for the apprehension and practical realization of the great truths revealed in the atonement.

The sympathy of higher orders with us is made known by the Redeemer himself: "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."<sup>1</sup> These words are very direct and explicit, and entirely sufficient. Yet there are many other words and facts which convey a like sense. Angels often press into the scenes of human history, and not as curious spectators, but as deeply interested in human welfare. And their profounder sympathy, as evinced in their exceeding joy over our repentance, is given in an association with illustrative facts of human experience—as in the parables of the lost piece of silver, the lost sheep, and the prodigal son—which clothe it in the likeness of our own sympathies.<sup>2</sup> Only, the sympathies of these higher orders are broader and deeper. Ours largely conform to the laws of our more special relationships, and are much subject to what is merely conventional, while theirs are free from such limitations. With them all intelligences are a common brotherhood. Hence their sympathies go out alike to all. So they come down to us. And, with the fullness of their love and profound apprehension of our miseries in sin, they have the deepest compassion for us. Hence their exceeding joy over our repentance. They view it as our escape from

<sup>1</sup> Luke xv, 7, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Chalmers: *Astronomical Discourses*, Discourse v.



the misery and death of sin, and our entrance upon the highway of life, with its terminus amid their own thrones and glories. This is their exceeding joy.

But their joy has other impulses than such sympathy with us. It specially has an impulse in a profound love and loyalty to Christ. They know that our salvation is dear to him. Their whole nature is profoundly enlisted with him in THEIR JOY. the work of saving us. And when they witness his success and his own satisfaction in our salvation they have exceeding joy—their joy welling up from the profoundest love and loyalty to him.

In such facts respecting the sympathy of higher orders with us, especially in its relation to our salvation and to Christ as the Saviour, we are assured of their knowledge of the great redemption in his blood, and of their profound interest therein. KNOW OF OUR REDEMPTION. Chosen messengers from their own mighty hosts welcomed his redeeming advent, and in gladdest strains proclaimed him a Saviour.<sup>1</sup> In the holy of holies, skillfully wrought cherubim with intent gaze hovered over the mercy-seat, the place of atonement and symbol of the atonement in the blood of Christ; and thus they symbolized the profound interest of the angels in the study of the mysteries of redemption.<sup>2</sup> Nor could they fail of such a knowledge of the atonement as would bring to them the practical force of its great truths.

2. *Meaning of the Lordship of Christ.*—The exaltation of Christ in supreme Headship over the Church, and in universal Lordship over the angels, is a truth clearly given in the Scriptures.<sup>3</sup> The passages noted in the reference are most explicit, and full of the loftiest utterances. Christ is Head of the Church universal, whether on earth or in heaven, and supreme Lord over all intelligences.

Such royal investiture of the exalted Christ is in reward of his humiliation and redeeming death. A recurrence to the GROUND OF EXALTATION. texts just given by reference will make this clear to any mind. We may cite one in illustration: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and

<sup>1</sup> Luke ii, 9-14.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xxv, 18, 22; Heb. ix, 5; 1 Pet. i, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. i, 20-23; iii, 10; Phil. ii, 9-11; 1 Pet. iii, 22.

that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Such exaltation has not respect to Christ simply in his divinity. The texts which reveal it give a contrary sense. Nor is the idea of such an exaltation of divinity in itself simply at all admissible. Much less may we hold this royal investiture simply in respect of the human nature of Christ. This is forbidden by the nature of the powers and prerogatives with which he is clothed. Saints and angels, principalities and powers, all holy intelligences, are made subject to him. They must render him the fullest obedience and the profoundest worship. His divine nature, therefore, must not be considered as separate from him in this marvelous exaltation, else Christianity be justly accounted the vastest system of idolatry ever established. It would be such a system, and not only on earth, but also in heaven, and throughout the universe. It is the incarnate Son, the Christ in two natures, and yet in unity of personality, that is so exalted. It is the redeeming God-man, the veritable *Theanthropos* who receives such royal investiture. As such he is worthy of it all; worthy in his divinity, and worthy because of his redeeming work. It is fitting that he who stooped so low should be exalted so high.

Such enthronement as the Saviour is the peculiar glory of the Son. There is thus claimed for him the obedience and worshipful homage of all intelligences. It is the peculiar glory of the Father that he is the Creator and Ruler of all things. When creation and providence are ascribed to the Son it is in the deepest truth and reality of both, but never excluding the idea of his subordination therein to the Father. And such facts are set forth in the Gospel, not as his peculiar glory, but specially in connection with his redeeming work, that we might be assured of its sufficiency.<sup>1</sup> This distinction of the peculiar glory of each is clearly given in the Scriptures.<sup>2</sup> In the first passage noted in the reference the words of the holy worshipers are, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created;" and in the second, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

It may seem strange that Christ, as the Saviour of man exalted in our nature, should be enthroned in sovereignty over angels as over saints. It is a noteworthy fact. Nor is it without its reasons. In his divinity he is worthy of such honor

<sup>1</sup> John i, 1-4, 14; Col. i, 14-18; Heb. i, 3.      <sup>2</sup> Rev. iv, 10, 11; v, 11, 12.

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and glory. And it is fitting that in his exaltation he should receive a dominion reaching far beyond the immediate subjects of his redemption. Then his redeeming work touches the heart of angels, and of all holy intelligences, as nothing else can. They will ever find their highest reason for a worshipful loyalty to his throne in that he ransomed us from the power of sin by the sacrifice of himself. In the profoundest sympathy with us in the miseries of sin and death, they have the profoundest love and loyalty to him for our salvation.

Yet this is no monopolized glory on the part of the redeeming Lord. His royal investiture, the bowing of every knee to him, the confession of every tongue that he is Lord—all is “to the glory of God the Father.” We have given two DIVINE HARMONIES. celestial scenes as opened in the Revelation: one, in which the Father receives universal homage as the Creator and Ruler of all things; the other, in which the Son receives universal homage as the Lamb slain. There is no dissonance here. Then in a third scene, as we behold the worshipers and listen to their devout strains, we catch the fullness of the divine harmony: “Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.”<sup>1</sup>

Now, grouping the several facts under the universal Lordship of Christ, we are again assured that the knowledge of his atonement comes to all intelligences, and in a manner profoundly to interest them. Its marvelous truth and grace, its revelation of God in his justice, and holiness, and love, must occupy their minds and take the deepest hold upon all the practical forces of their moral being.

And we thus find that great ends are answered by the universal Lordship of the exalted Christ. As he is enthroned over all, so is he set before all. This gives to all a knowledge of his GREAT ENDS ATTAINED. redeeming work. And the two facts of his humiliation and exaltation combine in a universal lesson of the highest moral and religious truth. There is such a lesson in the atonement. It is fraught with a manifold divine wisdom. We may here recall to mind the words of St. Paul, previously given by reference, “wherein he speaks of the work of redemption through Christ as containing a revelation, or exhibition, of the manifold—many-sided, or many-colored—wisdom of God—*ἡ πολυποίκιλος σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ.*”<sup>2</sup> The precise connection of thought in which the expression occurs it is not necessary to point out: it bears the stamp of a phrase coined by the apostle to embody the feeling produced in his mind by deep and protracted reflection on the gracious purpose of God in

<sup>1</sup> Rev. v, 13.<sup>2</sup> Eph. iii, 10.

Jesus Christ. After long, rapt meditation on the sublime theme, Paul feels that the divine idea of redemption has many aspects. The pure light of divine wisdom revealed in the Gospel is resolvable into many colored rays, which together constitute a glorious spectrum presented to the admiring view of principalities and powers in heavenly places, and of all men on earth whose eyes are open to see it."<sup>1</sup> But it is not simply for their admiration. The atonement has infinite treasures of most salutary truth. Such truth reaches all intelligences, specially through the universal Lordship of Christ, and rules them through the practical force of the ideas and motives which it embodies. This is the divinest moral government.

3. *Moral Grandeur of the Atonement.*—We depart not from the position that the atonement is directly and actually for man only, but none the less hold that of an infinitely broader practical relation to intelligent beings.

Divine moral government is one and universal, as the law of gravitation is one and universal. This one law holds sway over the earth, and the planets, and all the stellar worlds. So moral law, in its deeper principles, is one over man, and angels, and all intelligences. The material and moral systems are widely different: in the one, a law of necessitating force; in the other, a law of obligation, with freedom of the subjects. Here the highest ruling forces are in the moral ideas associated with the law, and in the sanctions which enforce its duties. As previously stated, their governing power is conditioned on certain moral motivities in the subjects. As the moral constitution of subjects is so correlated to the moral law that there may be a profound realization of its obligation, together with all the higher motives of duty, so, and only thus, has the moral law a high ruling power. Even penalty, as a salutary force of law, must take its place on such principles and in association with such facts.

The atonement in Christ takes its place in such a universal moral system. As an atonement for sin it has its application to the smallest segment of the system; but in its significance and ruling forces it has a universal application. And in the marvelous economies of his wisdom and love God has provided for its highest benedictions in all such breadth of relation. Illustrations we already have in the universal information of the atonement; in its ruling force by virtue of its own facts and the adjustment of all moral natures to its influence; in the universal Lordship of Christ as the special means of such information and influence. Thus as the highest revelation of God in his holiness, and justice,

<sup>1</sup> Bruce: *The Humiliation of Christ*, p. 324.

and love ; in his invincible hostility to sin ; in his immutable purpose to maintain his own honor and authority, and sacredly to guard the rights and interests of his subjects, the atonement takes its place in the universal moral system. With all the potencies of practical truth it addresses itself to all minds.

As the highest revelation of infinite love, the atonement will bind all holy intelligences in the deeper love to the one enthroned Lord of all, and so, with all their distinctions of order and grade, bind them in love to one another. THE SOCIAL BOND. “ And the principle which shall harmonize this system is at once seen, if it be assumed that when the Eternal Word was made flesh—when He who was ‘ before all things and in whom all things consist ’ humbled himself to the level of mortality, and, ‘ passing by the nature of angels, ’ took upon him a nature ‘ somewhat lower ’—there was a purpose involved which goes beyond the immediate results of the propitiatory work of the Redeemer. So that when his vicarious functions shall have reached their completion, the union of the divine and human natures shall continue to bear a relation to the social economy of the great immortal family in the heavens, and shall forever subsist as the principle or the reason of communication and harmony among all ranks.”<sup>1</sup> This view, so rational in thought and forceful in expression, is far clearer and more forceful when read in the light of such facts and principles as we have given in this chapter.

When, therefore, we assert a necessity for the atonement and set forth its benefits, we must, for any adequate conception, take an infinitely broader view than the present sphere of humanity, or even the eternal destiny of the race. THE BROADER VIEW. Because the one law of gravitation is universal, the disorder of one world might, if uncorrected, become a far-extended evil ; while its correction might be a good extending far beyond itself, and reaching even to all worlds—except to any wandering star lost in the blackness of darkness forever. So the evil of sin in this world might, with the license of impunity, become a far-extended evil : while its treatment under the atonement may become a far-extended good, reaching even to all intelligences—except the incorrigible or finally lost, fitly compared to a wandering and forever lost star.<sup>2</sup> And such treatment of sin, with forgiveness on a true faith in Christ, may be, and no doubt is, an infinitely higher moral good to other intelligences than its unconditional doom under the penalty of justice.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isaac Taylor : *Saturday Evening*, p. 370.

<sup>2</sup> Jude 13.

<sup>3</sup> Watson : *Sermons*, vol. i, pp. 187-189.

Thus all minds receive the great lesson of the atonement, with its  
SUBLIMEST      potency of moral truth and pathos of love. And all  
TRUTH.            intelligences, faithful or fallen, must bow the knee at  
the name of Jesus. In the lesson of his cross all must learn the pro-  
foundest truth of the divine holiness and love; of the evil and  
hopeless doom of unatoned or unrepented sin; of the obligation  
and blessedness of obedience and love. All holy intelligences,  
bound in deeper love and loyalty to the divine throne by the moral  
power of the atonement, will forever stand the firmer in their obe-  
dience and bliss.<sup>1</sup> And the cross, once the stigma of most heinous  
crime and the sign of the deepest abasement of Christ, shall hence-  
forth symbolize to all intelligences the sublimest moral truth in the  
universe.

<sup>1</sup> Bledsoe: *Theodicy*, pp. 204-208.

## CHAPTER XI.

## UNIVERSALITY OF THE ATONEMENT.

ARMINIANISM and Calvinism, the two leading evangelical systems, inevitably join issue on the extent of the atonement. The former, by its principles of moral government, its doctrine of sin, and the cardinal facts of its soteriology, is determined to a theory of universality. The latter, by its doctrine of divine decrees, its principles of soteriology, and the nature of the atonement which it maintains, is determined to a theory of limitation. Hence the question of extent is more than a question of fact ; it concerns the very doctrine of atonement. It specially concerns the doctrine of satisfaction. If in the divine destination the atonement is alike for all, and actually as well as potentially sufficient for all, then that doctrine cannot be true. Otherwise, all must be saved. Its advocates will not dissent from this.

There is a modified Calvinism which holds a general atonement ; but the fact does not affect the correctness of our statement respecting Calvinism proper. And this A NEW THEORY. modified view rather shifts than voids the very serious difficulties of limitation, or replaces them by others equally grave. The new theory originated early in the seventeenth century with Camero, an eminent Protestant, and professor of theology in France. Amyraut, Placæus, and Cappellus were his associates, and active in the development and propagation of his views. Baxter was in their succession. Many Congregationalists and New School Presbyterians have held substantially the same theory.<sup>1</sup>

The doctrine, while maintaining a general atonement, holds in connection with it special election and a sovereign application of grace in the salvation of the elect. Christ died for all. The Gospel, with all its overtures of grace, may therefore be preached to all in the fullest consistency. But all reject its proffered grace. They do this from a moral inability to its acceptance ; yet responsibly, because of a natural ability to the acceptance. Then God interposes and sovereignly applies the grace of atonement in the salvation of the elect.

In addition to the two distinctions of supralapsarian and infra-

<sup>1</sup> McClintock & Strong : *Cyclopædia*, vol. i, pp. 209, 210.

lapsarian election, this doctrine really gives us a third, which might be called infraredemptarian. A universal atonement could have no universal gracious purpose when beforehand God had elected a part to the benefit of its grace and excluded the rest therefrom. Indeed, such a prior election and a universal atonement cannot stand together. An election after redemption may be consistent with this modified Calvinistic soteriology. The theory, however, is really valueless for the relief of the very serious difficulties which beset the doctrine of a limited atonement. But we here dismiss it as not directly in the line of the present question.

This further may be said, without any retraction respecting Calvinism, that there is nothing in its deeper principles to limit the atonement, had it pleased God to destine it for all. Such a divine sovereignty as the system asserts was surely free to embrace all in the covenant of redemptive grace. But as the atonement of satisfaction, both by its own nature and by all the principles of soteriology scientifically united with it, must issue in the actual salvation of all for whom it is made, and as actual salvation is limited in fact, therefore such an atonement must have been limited in its divine destination. So it is held.

The question of extent in the atonement has its issue and interest mainly between Arminianism and Calvinism. Historically, its polemics is specially between them. Nor shall we turn aside in this discussion to treat its comparatively indifferent relation to other schemes. Both of these systems maintain the reality of an atonement in Christ as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness and salvation; and as the question of its nature lies specially between them, so does that of its extent.

#### I. DETERMINING LAW OF EXTENT.

1. *Intrinsic Sufficiency for All.*—If the son of a king should mediate in behalf of rebellious subjects, and so much should be required, in whatever form of personal sacrifice, for each individual forgiveness, then the extent of the forgiveness provided would be determined by the amount of sacrifice endured by the mediating son. The atonement in the mediation of Christ is on a different principle. So it is maintained, and has been, with the exception of such as hold the now generally discarded theory of an identical or equal penalty by substitution. Now by common consent the atonement is the same in intrinsic worth, and infinitely sufficient for all, whether really for all or for only a part. Hence, if there be a limitation to a part of mankind, it must be the result of a limiting divine destination, and not from any want of an intrinsic sufficiency



for all. So far there is now no reason for any issue between Calvinism and Arminianism.

2. *Divine Destination Determinative of Extent.*—The notion of a redemption of humanity as a nature, and therefore of all individual partakers of the nature, is inherently erroneous and false to the true doctrine of atonement. The atonement is for sinners as such, and, therefore, must be for them as individual sinners. It is only as such that they can be either condemned or forgiven. It is only, therefore, in their distinct personalities that they can be either in need of an atonement or the recipients of its grace. This notion of the redemption of human nature as such, and therefore of all men, has never gained any formal position in Arminian theology; yet it has not been entirely absent from individual opinion and utterance. It has, probably, commended itself to some as strongly favoring the universality of the atonement. If founded in truth it would be conclusive of the question; but it is not founded in the truth, nor can it be, and for the reason previously given. Nor is such a position at all necessary to the grand truth of a universal atonement.

The atonement is for individual men by virtue of a divine intention. While, therefore, sufficient for all, it is really for all or for a part only, according to that same intention. We are so writing in full knowledge of the fact that such is precisely and explicitly the Calvinistic position. We shun it not on that account. It is the truth in the case, and, therefore, we fully accept it. We shall suffer no detriment, but find an advantage, in the maintenance of a universal atonement. But Calvinistic divines, while holding a limited atonement, are most pronounced upon its intrinsic sufficiency for all. And they warmly repel all accusation of a contrary view, and all idea that a limitation of sufficiency can have any logical sequence to their doctrine. No Arminian can be more explicit or emphatic in the declaration of this sufficiency. The question of their consistency is another question, but one that does not properly arise here. But they are consistent and right in maintaining that the extent of the atonement is determined by its divine destination. While intrinsically sufficient for all, it is really for only a part, because God so intended it. Such is their ground.

We might verify these positions by numerous quotations from the highest Calvinistic authorities. Their truth, however, is so familiar to careful students of this subject, and so out of all question, as to be in little need of proof. A few quotations may be given in the way of example or illustration.

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THE CALVINIS-  
TIC VIEW.

WITSIUS. "The obedience and sufferings of Christ, considered in themselves, are, on account of the infinite dignity of his person, of that value as to have been sufficient for redeeming, not only all and every man in particular, but many myriads besides, had it so pleased God and Christ that he should have undertaken and satisfied for them."<sup>1</sup>

TURRETTIN. On the question respecting the extent of the atonement: "It does not respect the value and sufficiency of the death of Christ, whether as to its intrinsic worth it might be sufficient for the redemption of all men. It is confessed by all, that since its value is infinite, it would have been sufficient for the redemption of the entire human family had it appeared good to God to extend it to the whole world. . . . The question which we discuss concerns the purpose of the Father in sending the Son, and the intention of the Son in dying."<sup>2</sup>

HILL. "The two sides of this question do not imply any difference of opinion with regard to the sufficiency of the death of Christ, or with regard to the number and character of those who shall eventually be saved. . . . But they differ as to the destination of the death of Christ; whether in the purpose of the Father and the will of the Son it respected all mankind, or only those persons to whom the benefit of it is at length to be applied."<sup>3</sup>

HODGE. "All Calvinists agree in maintaining earnestly that Christ's obedience and sufferings were of infinite intrinsic value in the eye of the law, and that there was no need for him to obey or suffer an iota more nor a moment longer in order to secure, if God so willed, the salvation of every man, woman, and child that ever lived."<sup>4</sup> We add a few references.<sup>5</sup>

QUESTION OF CONSISTENCY. Whether such a view has scientific consistency is a question which concerns not us, but those who maintain it. Dr. Schaff has real ground for saying, as he artlessly does in the reference just given: "Full logical consistency would require us to measure the value of Christ's atonement by the extent of its actual benefit or availability, and either to expand or to contract it according to the number of the elect." If the atonement is by penal substitution, why did Christ suffer a far deeper punishment than strict

<sup>1</sup> Witsius: *On the Covenants*, vol. i, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> Turretin: *Atonement of Christ*, p. 123.

<sup>3</sup> Hill: *Lectures in Divinity*, pp. 505, 506.

<sup>4</sup> A. A. Hodge: *The Atonement*, p. 356.

<sup>5</sup> Owen: *Works* (Goold's), vol. x, p. 297; Schaff: *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. i, pp. 520, 521; Symington: *Atonement and Intercession*, p. 185; Smeaton: *The Apostles' Doctrine of Atonement*, p. 538; Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 544; Cunningham: *Historical Theology*, vol. ii, p. 332.

justice required as a full equivalent for the penal dues of the elect? We know that the excess of merit is ascribed to the infinite rank of Christ. But, on this doctrine, his penal suffering is a necessary element of atonement: and it is still true that he suffered a deeper punishment than justice required. Was this just? Would God so punish him when a far less measure would be all that justice required? The rectoral atonement has a place for the utmost vicarious suffering of Christ: but the satisfaction atonement has no place for any excess of substitutional punishment. There is an excess without any claim or ground in justice, or any end in grace. Punishment, without an adequate ground in justice, is itself an injustice. This is as true in the case of a substitute in penalty as in that of the actual offender; and as true of all excess of punishment above the requirement of justice as of punishment without any ground in justice. And what a waste of atoning worth! All the excess of unapplied grace—enough for all the finally lost and infinitely more—goes for nothing. And those who so cry out against a universal atonement as implying that Christ suffered and died for many in vain are thoroughly estopped by the inevitable implications of their own doctrine. Yet satisfactionists will not surrender this infinite sufficiency. In maintaining a limited atonement they have the profoundest need for it. They could not presume to vindicate the universal overture of atoning grace upon the ground of an atonement confessed to be sufficient for only a part.

It is surely clear enough, from the quotations and references given, that Calvinism holds the divine destination of the atonement to be determinative of its extent. We fully accept this position. Calvinism is right, not in the limitation of the atonement, but in the determining law of its extent.

3. *The True Inquiry.*—If the son of a king should interpose in atonement for rebellious subjects, any limitation must be imposed either by the will and purpose of the sovereign atoned, or by the will and purpose of the atoning son. No other has any power in the case. And if we knew the pleasure of each we could determine therefrom the extent of the reconciliation for which provision is made. The atonement is made between the Father and the Son. If limited, either the Father would not accept, or the Son would not make, an atonement for all. There is no other law of limitation. The true inquiry, therefore, respects the will of the Father and the Son, or what was the pleasure of each respecting the extent of the atonement.

In this we are still in full accord with the Calvinistic position.

This also is clear from the quotations and references previously given.

THE PIVOT. To these many others might be added. "The pivot on which the controversy—respecting the extent of the atonement—turns is, what was the purpose of the Father in sending his Son to die, and the object which Christ had in view in dying; not what is the value and efficacy of his death."<sup>1</sup> "But the question does truly and only relate to the design of the Father and of the Son in respect to the persons for whose benefit the atonement was made; that is, to whom, in the making of it, they intended it should be applied."<sup>2</sup>

## II. PLEASURE OF THE FATHER.

On such a question it is proper to conclude the pleasure of the Father from his own revealed character. There are intimately related facts of decisive testimony, and, also, divine utterances authoritative in the case.

1. *Question of his Sovereignty.*—No plea of the divine sovereignty can bar the inquiry into the divine pleasure respecting the extent of the atonement. In any case, the question is not so much what God might have done as what he was disposed to do and really has done. We raise no question respecting a true divine sovereignty, but discard a purely arbitrary one as utterly inconsistent with the character of God and the great facts of his providence. Even an absolute arbitrary sovereignty might as well conclude for a general as for a limited atonement. But God does not rule in such a sovereignty. All rewards of men according to moral character are to the contrary. So are the revealed decisions of the final judgment. And so is the atonement itself. An absolute sovereignty could need no atonement in order to forgiveness, or in determining the happy destinies of men. Such an administration would be far less inconsistent with the divine character than the unconditional reprobation, or equally dooming preterition, of the great part of mankind. And if there be a few facts or utterances which might be construed in favor of an arbitrary sovereignty, they must yield to the great facts, with the atonement itself, which prove the contrary. It is written, and often applied in this connection, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."<sup>3</sup> But can the forced application of such a text conclude this question? And did it seem good in the sight of the heavenly Father to limit an atonement sufficient for all to the benefit of only a part? Good how, or for what? Good as the expression

<sup>1</sup> Turretin : *The Atonement of Christ*, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> A. A. Hodge : *The Atonement*, p. 359.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xi. 26.

of a sovereignty which his providence and the atonement itself disclaim? Good as a revelation of justice or grace? Good as a salutary lesson of moral government? It could have no such reason, because an arbitrary sovereignty can have no other reason for its acts than its own arbitrariness.

2. *In one Relation to All.*—God is the Creator and Father of all men.<sup>1</sup> There is, therefore, no difference of divine relationship which could be a reason for limitation in the atonement.

This point will carry us further. The atonement originated in the divine compassion, and in its provisions and purposes answers to its yearnings. One reason of this compassion was in the divine Fatherhood. God so loved us as wretched and perishing, but especially because we were his wretched and perishing children. Hence the very reason of his redeeming love was common in all. It could not, therefore, have been the pleasure of God to destine the atonement to the favor of only a part, when his love, in which it originated, equally embraced all. And this universal divine love witnesses to a universal atonement.

3. *All in a Common State of Evil.*—As all men appeared in the vision of the divine prescience, there was no difference in their state of evil, certainly none which could be a reason for a partial redemption. Their depravity had a common source and was a common ruin. And however they might be foreseen to differ in actual life, satisfactionists themselves vigorously deny any and every thing in them as the reason of the alleged limitation. Hence there is not any peculiar evil in a part as the reason of a partial redemption.

This point, also, will carry us further. Again, the atonement originated in the divine compassion. God so loved us as to provide a ransom for our souls. This could be no other than a love of compassion, because the objects of it are sinners and enemies.<sup>2</sup> Why this pitying love? Its subjective form in God has an objective reason in us. That reason lies in the miseries of our moral ruin. And could this pitying love impose upon itself an arbitrary limitation when the very reason of it existed alike in all? And could it be the pleasure of the Father to limit the atonement to a part when his compassion, in which it originated, equally embraced all?

4. *Voice of the Divine Perfections.*—The atonement has a most intimate relation to the divine perfections. Hence they have testimony to give respecting the divine pleasure as to its extent.

Divine justice has no unsatisfiable claim. And the redeeming work of Christ, if so intended, is sufficient for its full contentment

<sup>1</sup> Num. xvi, 22; xxvii, 16; Acts xvii, 28; Heb. xii, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. v, 8-10; Eph. ii, 4, 5.

in behalf of all who accept its grace. So the most rigid partialism will affirm. Forgiveness on the ground of such an atonement tarnishes no glory of justice, nor sacrifices any right or interest of moral government. Hence all reason for limitation in divine justice is excluded.

JUSTICE.

The divine holiness has no reason for limitation. If the atonement is intrinsically efficacious in the sanctification of all the objects of its favor, then the broader its extent the greater the interest of holiness secured. Indeed, such higher realization of holiness must have been a great reason for the divine preference of a universal redemption.

HOLINESS.

As the atonement is a sufficient ground of forgiveness, and, in the case of every sinner saved, a higher revelation of the divine perfections than could be realized in his merited penal doom, so the broader the atonement the greater the good attained. There would also be the greater service to the ends of moral government. Hence, on either theory of atonement, the broader its destination, the broader is its helpful grace and the more salutary its moral lessons. Can it, therefore, be consistent with the divine wisdom to prefer the less good when, through the same atonement, the infinitely greater might be procured?

WISDOM.

Beyond these favoring facts, the extent of the atonement is a question of the divine goodness. What is the answer of that goodness? It is really voiced in the sublime words, "God is love!" A God of love must prefer the happiness of all. And as in very truth—as according to all the deeper principles of Calvinism—there was no hinderance in the case, his good pleasure must have been for a universal atonement.

GOODNESS.

God has spoken to this point so directly, and in such utterances, as to put the fact of his good pleasure for a universal atonement out of all question.<sup>1</sup> Is it true, as he affirms under most solemn self-adjuration, that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live? Is it true that he so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son for its redemption? Is it true that he will have all men to be saved? Is it true that he is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish? Can it be, then, that in the absence of all hinderance, and with the presence of an infinitely greater good, he preferred a limited atonement, and sovereignly destined one intrinsically sufficient for all to the favor of only a part? It cannot be. And the Father placed no narrower limit to the grace of redemption than the uttermost circle of humanity.

WORDS OF GOD.

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xxxiii, 11; John iii, 16; 1 Tim. ii, 4; 2 Peter iii, 9.

## III. PLEASURE OF THE SON.

1. *Application of Preceding Facts.*—All the facts and principles respecting the pleasure of the Father have full application in the case of the Son. They are of one mind, and the same objects of redeeming love are before them. There is equally with the Son an absence of all reason for a preference of limitation in the atonement, and the presence of the same reasons for his pleasure in its universality.

2. *Atoning Work the Same.*—In an atonement by identical or equal penalty, the greater sacrifice required by the greater extent might have been a reason with the Son for limitation. But the atonement is not such. And no lower step of abasement nor deeper anguish was required to embrace all within the sufficiency of its redemptive grace. The vicarious sufferings of Christ as actually endured are all-sufficient for a universal atonement.

We are here in full accord with the highest authorities on the doctrine of satisfaction. This will appear on a recurrence to citations and references previously given. We may add one here : “All that Christ did and suffered would have been necessary had only one human soul been the object of redemption ; and nothing different, and nothing more, would have been required had every child of Adam been saved through his blood.”<sup>1</sup> While this view is utterly inconsistent with the principles of satisfactionists, it shows equally well their position on the question in hand. And they ever allege this sufficiency as the chief ground on which they attempt a defense of the divine sincerity in a universal overture of redemptive-grace. If, therefore, the sufferings of Christ as actually endured are sufficient for the salvation of all men, there could have been no reason or motive from the amount of suffering necessary to give him preference for a limited atonement.

3. *A Question of his Love.*—The question, then, respecting the pleasure of the Son has its answer from his love. That answer must be decisive. Nor is it in any doubt. The Son of God, who in pitying love to sinners parted with his glory and humbled himself to the deepest suffering and shame, was not wanting in redeeming love to all men. And it was his good pleasure that his atonement should be for all. His cross so affirms.

## IV. SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY.

Under this heading we might discuss at length the Scripture texts usually brought in proof respectively of limitation and universality

<sup>1</sup> Hodge : *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 545.

in the atonement. This, however, is not our purpose ; and a brief treatment will answer for the issue.

1. *Proof-texts for Limitation.*—The texts of Scripture more directly applied in proof of a limited atonement are not numerous. Nor will they require a critical or elaborate exegesis to show either their affirmative inconclusiveness or their utter impotence against the many which so explicitly assert its universality. We shall give the texts for limitation by reference and without full citation. And for the sake of a manifest fairness we will give them from a master in Calvinism, with his own italicizing and connecting and explanatory words.

“*The mission and death of Christ are restricted to a limited number—to his people, his sheep, his friends, his Church, his body ;* and nowhere extended to all men severally and collectively. Thus Christ is ‘called Jesus, because he shall save *his people* from their sins.’<sup>1</sup> He is called the Saviour of *his body* ;<sup>2</sup> ‘the good shepherd who lays down his life *for the sheep*,’<sup>3</sup> and ‘*for his friends*.’<sup>4</sup> He is said ‘to die that he might gather together in one *the children of God* that were scattered abroad.’<sup>5</sup> It is said that Christ ‘hath purchased *the Church* with his own blood.’<sup>6</sup> If Christ died for every one of Adam’s posterity why should the Scriptures so often restrict the object of his death to a few?’<sup>7</sup>

This should be noted first, that in all the texts given there is not one word which limits the atonement to the subjects named. And with infinitely more reason and force may we ask, If the atonement is for only a few, why do the Scriptures so often assert that it is for all? If, as assumed, it is in its own nature necessarily saving, and the actual saving is included in it, then, of course, there is a limitation. But it is not such. Sufficient proof to the contrary has already been given. Nothing respecting the atonement is more certain than the real conditionality of its saving grace. Hence, it is a mere assumption that the atonement is necessarily saving, and, therefore, that the actual saving is the extent of it. And the elimination of this assumption invalidates the sum of the author’s argument. Christ did die for the subjects named in these texts ; but as they are without a restricting word, they are without proof of a limited atonement.

Stress is laid upon the terms, his people, his sheep, his friends, his Church, his body, as though they designated a distinct and limited class for which Christ died. They are a distinct and limited class, but as actually saved, not simply as

NO LIMITING  
WORD.

SPECIAL  
TERMS.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. i, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. v, 23.

<sup>3</sup> John x, 15.

<sup>4</sup> John xv, 13.

<sup>5</sup> John xi, 52.

<sup>6</sup> Acts xx, 28 ; Eph. v, 25, 26.

<sup>7</sup> Turretin : *The Atonement of Christ*, pp. 125, 126.



redeemed, and especially not before their redemption. There is no such a class except as the fruit of atonement. Hence, there could be no such a restricted class for which Christ died. The atonement, as the only ground of their peculiar relation to Christ, must precede that relation, and be made for them as lost sinners, ungodly, and enemies.<sup>1</sup> They can enter into such a peculiar relation to Christ only through the grace of an atonement previously made for them. That same atonement, previously made for them as sinners, was so made for all men.

If these texts prove a limited atonement they must be inconsistent with its universality; or, if consistent with this, they do not prove a limited one. There is not the least difficulty CONSISTENT WITH UNIVERSALITY. in this consistency. It is true, indeed, that Christ died for all the actual sharers in the saving grace of atonement. And there are special reasons for emphasizing the fact. Thus Christ impresses upon their minds the greatness of his love to them, and the greatness of the benefit received through the grace of his redemption, and so enforces his own claim upon their love. But no law of interpretation either requires or implies the assumed restriction in such a use of terms. And the scheme of universality can use them just as freely and consistently as the most rigid partialism.

2. *Proof-texts for Universality.*—There is one class with the universal terms *all* and *every*. “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in ALL MEN. due time.”<sup>2</sup> Yes, to be testified as a truth, and not to be witnessed against. And the text gives its own testimony. We know not a formula for the better expression of a universal atonement. “For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.”<sup>3</sup> If God is not in some similarity of meaning the Saviour of all men, as he is specially the Saviour of believers, there is here a comparison without any basis in analogy. If many are foreordained to eternal destruction, or merely under the preterition of a limited atonement equally dooming them to perdition, God is not in any sense the Saviour of all men. But with a universal atonement, whereby the salvation of all is possible, as that of believers is actual, there is a clear sense in which he is the Saviour of all men, and a sense consistent with the implied analogy of the text.

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death EVERY MAN. for every man.”<sup>4</sup> Every man is every man. The identity of the

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v. 6–10; Eph. ii, 11–22. <sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. ii, 5, 6. <sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. iv, 10. <sup>4</sup> Heb. ii, 9.

two terms of a proposition does not exclude their equivalence. Rather, we have the simple truth that a fact is what it is. And no skill in exegesis can reduce this text to the measure of a limited atonement.

There is another class which affirms the redemption of the world, and in the truest sense of a universal atonement.<sup>1</sup> The weakness of all attempts to reduce these texts to the meaning of a limited atonement really concedes their irreducible universality. The attempt requires an identification of *the world* with *the elect*. They must have one sense, in that both must mean the same persons. These texts would thus be classed with the proof-texts of limitation, previously considered. World would be one in meaning with the people, sheep, friends, Church, body of Christ. Will it bear such a sense? The exegete has not yet arisen who can answer affirmatively and make good his answer.

3. *Redemption in Extent of the Evil of Sin.*—More than once is the co-extension of sin and atonement set forth.

“Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.”<sup>2</sup> The “all men” in relation to Adam are all in the fullest sense. No real Calvinist will question it. But the “all men” in relation to the redemption in Christ must be all in the same sense of universality. Indeed, the “all men” in the two relations to Adam and Christ are the very same; and only a forced interpretation could give less extension to the term in the latter case than in the former. The text clearly gives us a universal atonement.

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”<sup>3</sup> In the full sense of Scripture, Christ died for men as in a state of sin and death, and only for such. But he died for all; therefore all were dead. Thus, in a somewhat syllogistic statement the text gives the universality of the atoning death of Christ as the major premise. It is thus placed as a truth above question.

For “all dead” some give the rendering “all died”—died in and with Christ.<sup>4</sup> Thereon an attempt is made to limit the atonement to the elect. We will not contend about the new rendering, but must dispute the limiting interpre-

<sup>1</sup> John i, 29; iii, 16, 17; xii, 47; 2 Cor. v, 18, 19; 1 John ii, 1, 2; iv, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. v, 18.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. v, 14, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Candlish: *The Atonement*, p. 62; Alford, in loc.

tation. Candlish here finds the Headship of Christ and the doctrine of imputation of sin to him, and of all that he does and suffers to those whom he represents, in a sense "that whatever befalls the Head must be held to pass, and must actually pass, efficaciously, to all whom he represents." This is the necessary salvation of all for whom Christ died. Hence, he must have died for only a part, or the apostle's argument is implicated in Universalism: "Not only is the argument thus hopelessly perplexed, but, as in the former case, it is found to tell in favor of the notion of universal salvation rather than any thing else; making actual salvation, through the death and life of Christ, co-extensive with death through the sin of Adam." We could not deplore such a realization. Nor could Dr. Candlish. His trouble is with the logic of the case. Actual salvation is limited in fact; there-  
THE TROUBLE.  
 fore, an atonement necessarily saving must be limited. He is logically right; but the trouble comes from his erroneous doctrine of satisfaction. With an atonement in vicarious suffering sufficient for all, but really conditional in the saving result, its universality is in full accord with a limited actual salvation. There is, therefore, no exigency of interpretation from a necessary harmony of fact and doctrine, requiring either the exclusion of the manifest comparison of sin and atonement in co-extension, or the reduction of a universal term to the meaning of a part. And the text above cited, despite all the efforts of a limiting scheme, is clear proof of a universal atonement.

4. *Testimony of the Great Commission.*—"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."<sup>1</sup> This great commission laid its solemn charge upon the apostles with all the obligation and authority which the Master, now risen and with all power in his hand, could impose. So it comes down the ages upon all Churches and ministers. And so all true Churches and ministers receive it. We thus have certain indisputable facts intimately related to the extent of the atonement, and decisive of its universality.

The very terms of the great commission are decisive of this, that the Gospel is for all. And its universal preaching  
THE GOSPEL FOR ALL.  
 should be, and in the very nature of it must be, the free offer of saving grace in Christ to all. The most rigid limitationists fully admit this.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, they have no alternative. Nor need we insist upon what no one questions.

<sup>1</sup> Mark xvi, 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Symington: *Atonement and Intercession*, pp. 209, 210.

The Gospel is the overture of salvation. All to whom it is preached may accept it and be saved. To this end it is preached. And the same privilege would ever accompany the Gospel, were it fully preached in all the world. Nor need we here contend for what is fully conceded.<sup>1</sup>

It is the duty of all to whom the Gospel comes to accept it in faith, and a faith unto salvation. The same would be true, were it in the fullest sense preached to all. This obligation is in the very terms of the great commission.

Hence, eternal destinies are determined according as the Gospel is received or rejected: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Only on an obligation to a true, saving faith in Christ could our action in the case have such consequence. Other texts equally express or imply the same duty of a saving faith.<sup>2</sup> We shall have everlasting life or shall perish, according as we believe or believe not; are in condemnation or free from it, according to the same action; are heirs of life eternal or under the abiding wrath of God, as we believe on the Son or do not believe. Limitationists concede and maintain this duty of faith.<sup>3</sup> Hence, we need not further support what is not disputed. Indeed, special account is made of this obligation for the vindication of divine justice in the final doom of unbelievers.

The duty of a saving faith in Christ implies an actual grace of salvation in him. The required faith must terminate in his redeeming death. An attainable grace of salvation absolutely conditions the obligation of such a faith. But, on a limited atonement, the Gospel comes to many for whom there really is no such grace. Nor will the assertion of an intrinsic sufficiency for all void this consequence. Then can this faith be the duty of any one for whom there is no saving grace? How can it be? It has no objective truth, and would be a trust in what does not exist. Nor could the salvation possibly accrue upon the faith. And has Christ enjoined the offer of an impossible blessing? Has he commanded faith in what is not real? Has he made the unbelief of what is not true a sin of exceeding demerit and damnableness? No, he has not done any of these things. We can most positively so deny, but only on the ground of a real atonement for all.

On a limited atonement, the duty of this faith must be most difficult—too difficult, indeed, to be so responsible. The faith implies,

<sup>1</sup> Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 558.      <sup>2</sup> John iii, 14–16, 18, 36.

<sup>3</sup> *Princeton Essays*, First Series, p. 287; Crawford: *The Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 202; Candlish: *The Atonement*, pp. 172, 260.

not only an intrinsically sufficient, but an actually sufficient, atonement for every one exercising it. Faith in this fact of an actual atonement must precede, as its necessary condition, the faith of a saving trust in Christ. This is denied.<sup>1</sup> Both authors given in the reference properly distinguish the mental acts of one in believing that Christ died for him, and in believing in him for salvation; but, strange enough, both deny a necessary precedence to the former act of faith, and, indeed, give precedence to the latter. We know not the mental philosophy by which they place these facts in this order. It must originate in the exigency of their soteriology rather than in the careful study and scientific use of the facts of psychology. But no man ever did or can believe in Christ unto salvation without first believing that he died for him. This is the necessary order of the mental facts. And it is utterly nugatory to plead that no one is commanded first to believe that Christ died for him. This is not the point; the necessity arises, not from the immediate command of such a preceding faith, but from inevitable laws of the mind, under the obligation of a divinely enjoined saving faith in Christ. Such is the necessary order of kindred facts: "For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."<sup>2</sup> Here faith in God, as existing and good, must precede all successful coming to him in an earnest seeking and a true faith of trust for his blessing. There is the same necessary order of facts respecting our faith in Christ: first, in believing that he died for us; then, in a sure trust of faith in him for salvation.

It is here that, on a limited atonement, the exceeding difficulty of the required faith arises. If Christ died for only a part, and, as many hold, for only the far smaller part of adults, no man has, nor can have, previous to his conversion, satisfactory evidence that there is an atonement for him. And, according to the doctrine of chance as applicable in the case, the presumption is strongly against it. How, then, can he savingly trust in Christ? It is nothing to the point to answer, that he does not know that he is left without redemption; for what he needs to be assured of, as the necessary condition of a saving faith in Christ, is, that he did redeem him.

We group the facts given us under the great commission. The Gospel is for all, and in the free overture of saving grace in Christ. Salvation is the privilege of all to whom the gracious overture is made. A saving faith in the redemption of

<sup>1</sup> Turretin: *Atonement of Christ*, p. 178; Smeaton: *The Doctrine of the Atonement as Taught by Christ Himself*, p. 322.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xi, 6.

Christ is the duty of all who have the Gospel. These are not mere inferences, but facts clearly given in the Scriptures, and fully conceded by the advocates of a limited atonement. By all the force of their logic they witness to the fact of a real atonement for all. They have no other ground. The overture of saving grace has no other; nor the privilege of salvation; nor the duty of a saving faith in Christ; nor the guilt and damnableness of unbelief. Therefore, these facts imperatively require a universal atonement, and, so requiring, affirm its truth.

#### V. FALLACIES IN DEFENSE OF LIMITATION.

The law of scientific accordance in vitally related truths and facts makes very serious trouble for the theory of a limited atonement. Certain very discordant but admitted facts require reconciliation with the limitation, or, rather, with the divine sincerity, as concerned therein. We shall show that the attempted reconciliation proceeds with fallacies, and, therefore, ends in fallacy.

1. *Facts Admitted.*—These facts were given with the great commission in the previous section, and here need only to be recalled. The Gospel is for all. Salvation is the privilege of all under the Gospel. A saving faith in Christ is the duty of all who hear the Gospel. Such are the facts. They have the authority of Scripture. Limitationists fully admit them, as manifest in references previously given. Such references might be increased to a great number. No modern Calvinistic author of any influence will question them. The common attempt to reconcile them with the divine sincerity is in their full admission.

2. *Inconsistent with the Divine Sincerity.*—There is here no issue either on the admitted facts or on the divine sincerity: the question respects the consistency of the facts with that sincerity, on the ground of a limited atonement. We assert their inconsistency, and accuse their attempted reconciliation of egregious fallacy. On a limited atonement, the Gospel cannot be sincerely preached to all. Nor can salvation be the privilege of all. Nor can a saving faith in Christ be the duty of all, nor of any for whom his death was not divinely destined as an atonement. Such a divine overture of grace and requirement of faith would be to the unredeemed a mockery and a cruelty. These facts go into the present issue. There are no other facts or vindictory pleas which can void the force of their logic. They do not implicate the divine sincerity, but conclude the universality of the atonement as the only ground of their consistency with that sincerity.

3. *Sufficiency of Atonement in Vindication.*—The ground on

which limitationists specially attempt a vindication of the divine sincerity in a universal overture of saving grace, with the other admitted facts, is an alleged sufficiency of the atonement for all.<sup>1</sup> The fact is so familiar that there is but slight reason for any reference. We have previously shown how fully the advocates of a limited atonement maintain its intrinsic sufficiency, in just what Christ did and suffered, for the salvation of all men. Thus they have their position of defense in the present issue. Whether, on their doctrine of atonement, there is a real and available sufficiency, such as will answer for the required vindication, we shall directly consider. For the present it may suffice to note the ground on which the vindication is attempted.

4. *True Sense of Sufficiency.*—We must distinguish between a mere intrinsic and an actual sufficiency. There is reason for the distinction. Satisfactionists fully recognize it, especially in application to the redemptive work of Christ. An intrinsic sufficiency is from what a thing is in its own capability. An actual sufficiency is from its appropriation. A life-boat may have ample capacity for the rescue of twenty shipwrecked mariners; but if appropriated, and limited by the appropriation, to the rescue of only ten, the actual and available sufficiency is only so much. One man has money enough for the liberation of twenty prisoners for debt; but whether it shall be available, and so actually sufficient, depends upon his use or appropriation of it. Even if he should appropriate the whole sum, but at the same time restrict it to the benefit of a fixed number—ten of the twenty—then, while intrinsically sufficient for the liberation of all, it would be actually sufficient and available for only the designated ten. The atonement of satisfaction must yield to such a consequence. The redemptive mediation of Christ, in just what he did and suffered, has intrinsic sufficiency for the salvation of all men, but there is a limiting divine destination. Such are the facts as given by satisfactionists themselves. The sufficiency for all is only potential, not actual from a universal destination. But for the divine vindication in a universal overture of saving grace in Christ, and in holding all to so responsible a duty of faith in him, a mere intrinsic sufficiency will not answer. Only an actual and available sufficiency will so answer.

5. *Sufficiency only with Divine Destination.*—The sufferings of Christ have no atoning value except as they were vicariously endured for sinners with the purpose of an atonement. His incarnation and death are conceivable and possible entirely apart from the

<sup>1</sup> *Princeton Essays, First Series*, p. 291; Symington: *Atonement and Intercession*, pp. 186, 213.

purposes of redemption. In that case they could have no atoning element. All atonement is absolutely conditioned by his so suffering for sinners.

The extent of the atonement is thus determined by its divine destination. This agrees with the above principle. And, as we have seen, it is a primary principle in the doctrine of satisfaction. Hence, as atonement is necessarily conditioned on the divine appointment and acceptance of the sufferings of Christ as a substitute in behalf of sinners, so the divine destination absolutely fixes the limit of its extent. There is no atonement beyond. As the sufferings of Christ are an atonement for sin only with their divine destination to that end, so they have no atoning value for any one beyond those for whom they were redemptively destined. And the plea of a sufficient atonement for all, while its limited destination is firmly maintained, is the sheerest fallacy. It is as utterly insufficient for all for whom it was not divinely destined as though no atonement had been made for any. Hence the alleged ground on which it is attempted to vindicate the divine sincerity in the universal overture of saving grace, and the imperative requirement of saving faith in Christ, is no ground at all.

6. *Limited in the Scheme of Satisfaction.*—If we test the assumption of a universal sufficiency in the atonement by the principles of the satisfaction theory, we shall further see how utterly groundless it is. This is an entirely fair method. For unless there be a sufficiency according to these principles, it is the sheerest assumption, and the vindictory use of it utterly groundless. And this we maintain, that the satisfaction atonement is, from its own principles, of limited sufficiency.

In this theory atonement is by substitutional punishment in satisfaction of justice. Sin must be punished according to its desert. Any omission would be an injustice in God. So the theory maintains, as we have shown. There is no salvation for any sinner except through a substitute in penalty. There is no atonement for any one except in penal substitution. But by divine covenant and destination Christ suffered the punishment of sin for only an elect part, not for all. So the theory asserts. Such an atonement is as utterly insufficient for any and all for whose sins penal satisfaction is not rendered to justice as though no atonement were made, or there were no Christ to make one.

From its own principles the atonement of satisfaction is necessarily efficient just as broadly as it is sufficient. The necessary



elements of its sufficiency must give it efficiency in the actual salvation of all for whom it is made. If Christ, as accepted substitute, took the place of an elect part under both precept and penalty, and rendered full satisfaction in respect of both, of course they must all be saved. Their repentance and faith are the purchase of redemptive grace, and must take their place as necessary facts in a process of salvation monergistically wrought.

While such is the logic of the principles of satisfaction, its advocates fully support the same view. The fact was given in previous citations and references. Many such might <sup>AUTHORITIES.</sup> be added, though a few will suffice. "His atonement may be truly called 'a finished work,' securing not only a *possible* salvation, but an *actual* salvation."<sup>1</sup> "If the fruits of the death of Christ be to be communicated unto us upon a condition, and that condition to be among those fruits, and be itself to be absolutely communicated upon no condition, then all the fruits of the death of Christ are as absolutely procured for them for whom he died as if no condition had been prescribed; for these things come all to one. . . . Faith, which is this condition, is itself procured by the death of Christ for them for whom he died, to be freely bestowed on them, without the prescription of any such condition as on whose fulfilling the collation of it should depend."<sup>2</sup> "But God, in his infinite mercy, having determined to save a multitude whom no man could number, gave them to his Son as his inheritance, provided he would assume their nature and fulfill all righteousness in their stead. In the accomplishment of this plan Christ did come into the world, and did obey and suffer in the place of those thus given to him, and for their salvation. This was the definite object of his mission, and, therefore, his death had a reference to them which it could not possibly have to those whom God determined to leave to the just recompense of their sins."<sup>3</sup> Respecting the atonement for the elect: "Is it any thing short of a real and personal substitution of Christ in their room and stead, as their representative and surety, fulfilling all their legal obligations, and undertaking and meeting all their legal liabilities? Is it any thing short of such a substitution as must insure that, in consequence of it, they are now, by a legal right—in terms of the law which he as their covenant head has magnified and made honorable in their behalf—free from the imputation of legal blame; that as one with him in his righteousness they are judicially absolved and acquitted, justified from all their

<sup>1</sup> Crawford : *Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> Owen : *Works* (Goold's), vol. x, p. 450.

<sup>3</sup> Hodge : *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 547.

transgressions, and invested with a valid legal title to eternal life and salvation?"<sup>1</sup>

Such is the atonement of satisfaction. From its own nature it must save all for whom it is made. It has ever waged war upon Arminianism for the denial of this causal efficiency as being a denial of the true nature of atonement. It is such that, were it for all, then all must be saved. Hence it is denied that it is for all. A limited actual salvation is ever given as the proof of a limited atonement. Such is the only possible atonement. The facts of substitution in Christ necessary to an atonement must be efficient in the salvation of all whom he substitutes.

Is such an atonement sufficient for all? It is made, as maintained, on a covenant between the Father and the Son. By their consenting pleasure it is for a given number of elect souls, and for no others. We accept the divine destination as the determining law of its extent. We give full credit to its advocates for asserting its intrinsic sufficiency for all. But an intrinsic or potential sufficiency is one thing, while an actual and available sufficiency is another. Recurring to the citations of limitationists in the assertion of this sufficiency for all, we often find a qualified expression after this manner: The mediation of Christ, in just what he did and suffered, is sufficient for the salvation of all men, had it pleased the Father and the Son to destine it for all. But this destination is denied. It is the determining fact of a limited atonement. Hence, on this doctrine, there are many whose place Christ did not take in either precept or penalty. The fact concludes the question of sufficiency against the limitationists. They must not ignore their own absolutely limiting doctrine, nor must they, in the exigency of defense, be allowed to call a contingent sufficiency—a sufficiency that might have been but is not—a real sufficiency. They must abide by their own principles.

How can there be a sufficient atonement for the non-elect, when according to the principles and averments of this theory there is for them no atonement? Will limitationists answer? Did Christ die for the non-elect? Did he fulfill for them the righteousness which the divine law imperatively requires, and without which there is no salvation? Did he suffer the merited punishment of their sins, also held to be absolutely necessary to their discharge? A limited atonement has only a negative answer. Where, then, is the sufficiency for them? The doctrine must deny

<sup>1</sup> Candlish: *The Atonement*, pp. 247, 248. For like views see also Smeaton: *The Apostles' Doctrine of the Atonement*, pp. 537-540; Hill: *Lectures in Divinity*, pp. 510, 511; Witsius: *The Covenants*, vol. i, p. 206.

its most fundamental principles even to pretend to a sufficiency. The atonement is now, but the work of Christ in making it is in past time. Its extent was then absolutely determined. It is for those for whom it was made, and never can be for others. The principles of the doctrine so determine it. An immutable divine decree so bounds it.<sup>1</sup> And only with egregious fallacy can there be even a pretense of sufficiency in the atonement for the non-elect.

Then, on the doctrine of a limited atonement, it is impossible to reconcile the free and universal overture of saving grace in Christ, and the imperative duty of all who hear the Gospel savingly to believe in him, with the divine sincerity. There is for many no atonement or saving grace. The offered grace is not in the offer. The utmost faith is utterly groundless and delusive. Could one non-elect soul, held to the duty of a saving trust in Christ under the penalty of endless perdition, have a faith equal in strength to the combined faith of millions saved, it would be fruitless of forgiveness and salvation to him, as a soul without the substitution of Christ cannot be forgiven and saved. So the doctrine of satisfaction must affirm. What is the conclusion? The real and unquestioned facts are still before us. On the one hand are the universal overture of saving grace and the responsible duty of saving faith; on the other, the divine sincerity therein. There is no issue between them. There is no question of any such issue. The question is whether the former are consistent with the latter on the ground of a limited atonement? Certainly they are not. Nor can the divine sincerity be thereon vindicated. We give this discussion of the question in proof. The attempted reconciliation proceeds with fallacies and ends in fallacy. The inevitable conclusion is the universality of the atonement.

7. *Assumption of Only a Seeming Inconsistency.*—With seeming doubt as to the satisfactoriness of the preceding defense, it is assumed that, after all, the admitted facts may not be inconsistent with the divine sincerity; that our inability to reconcile them is not conclusive of an absolute contrariety; that to higher intelligences, and especially to God, they may appear in full harmony. “That we are incapable of reconciling them does not prove them to be irreconcilable. God may be capable of reconciling them; creatures of a higher intellectual and moral rank may see their reconcilableness; or we ourselves, when elevated to a brighter sphere of being, may yet be fully equal to the difficult problem.”<sup>2</sup> But so conjectural a solution will not answer for so real a difficulty. And there are con-

<sup>1</sup> *The Westminster Confession*, chap. iii, secs. iii–vii.

<sup>2</sup> Symington: *Atonement and Intercession*, p. 210.

trarieties absolutely irreconcilable. Such is the case here. Our highest reason must so pronounce. We cannot rationally go behind it, not even hypothetically. We may accept in faith what is above our reason, but we cannot by any mere conjecture solve, nor even relieve, a difficulty which is contradictory to our reason. This is the insuperable difficulty here. God cannot sincerely offer saving grace to any soul when the grace is not in the offer. Nor can he righteously impose the duty of a saving faith in Christ upon any one for whom there is no salvation in him.

8. *Mixed State of Elect and Non-elect.*—Another vindication is attempted on the assumption of a necessity arising out of the mixed state of elect and non-elect. The only alternative to an indiscriminate offer of grace and requirement of faith would be an open discrimination of the two classes. “The warrant of faith is the testimony of God in the Gospel. And, it may be asked, could not this testimony have been made only to those to whom it was his design to give grace to receive it? We answer: Not without doing away with that mixed state of human existence which God has appointed for important purposes; not without making a premature disclosure of who are the objects of his special favor and who are not, to the entire subversion of that moral economy under which it is the good pleasure of his will that men should subsist in this world; not without even subverting the very design of salvation by faith.”<sup>1</sup>

The reasons alleged for secrecy in the elective and reprobative purposes of God are without force; certainly without sufficient force for his vindication in a graceless offer of saving grace in Christ. The mixed state of elect and reprobate would continue as it is. The moral economy under which we live would remain. It is God’s own, and of his appointment. And has he so ordered it as to require of him a free overture of saving grace to many for whom there is none? Nor would the plan of salvation by faith be subverted. Many, without any question of an atonement for them, refuse all saving faith in Christ; while many, equally without doubt of an atonement for them, do savingly believe in him. With this discrimination, there would still be a proper sphere of saving faith for the elect; and, on the doctrine of satisfaction, the faith would be under the same determining law as now.

This disclosure would accord with the facts in the case, and be far better than a false show of grace. It must be made some time, and is just the same if made now. Nor would the destiny of any soul be affected thereby. Destiny is determined by the decree of God, not by the disclosure of its elective discriminations. Believ-

<sup>1</sup> Symington: *Atonement and Intercession*, p. 212.

ers and unbelievers would be the very same—neither more nor less nor other in either class, as the immutable decree of election and preterition is immutable. There is no urgent reason for this indiscriminate overture of partial grace : while no urgency could justify it. Let the atonement be preached, with the announcement of its partialism, and that the non-elect have no interest in it and no duty respecting it, and the result, as determined by an absolute sovereignty working monergistically, will be the very same. And a limited atonement still contradicts facts divinely given. It must, therefore, be an error.

9. *Distinction of Secret and Preceptive Divine Will.*—As a last resort, the reconciliation of this overture of grace and requirement of faith with the divine sincerity is attempted on a distinction between the secret or decretive and the preceptive will of God. “The purposes of God are not the rule of our duty, and, whatever God may design to do, we are to act in accordance with his preceptive will.”<sup>1</sup> “The Gospel call may be regarded as expressive of man’s duty rather than of the divine intention.”<sup>2</sup> Is this reasoning? The character of Dr. Hodge and Dr. Symington will not allow us to question its sincerity. But can the precepts and purposes of God run counter to each other? Can he openly offer a grace, and with the forms of gracious invitation and promise, which he secretly intends not to give, and by an eternal purpose withholds? Can he openly command the duty of a saving faith upon any one for whom there is no saving grace, and whom his eternal decree absolutely dooms to the perdition of sin? How could these things be without duplicity? And it is a marvelous supposition that the Gospel, as the invitation and command of God, may represent our privilege and duty, conveying the one and imposing the other, but not his secret will and decree respecting us. Yet it is only on such a supposition that this attempted vindication can have any pertinence whatever. Indeed, the attempt proceeds upon the assumption of this contrariety. A doctrine with such exigency of defense cannot be true.

The atonement, as a provision of infinite love for a common race in a common ruin of sin, with its unrestricted overture of grace and requirement of saving faith in Christ, is, and must be, an atonement for all.

Anselm : *Cur Deus Homo* (translated in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1844, 1845); Grotius : *Defensio Fidei Catholicæ de Satisfactione Christi* (translated in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1879); Turretin : *The Atonement of Christ*; Candlish : *The Atonement*; Magee : *Atonement and Sacrifice*; Smith, John Pyle : *Sacrifice and*

<sup>1</sup> *Princeton Essays*, First Series, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> Symington: *Atonement and Intercession*, p. 211.

*Priesthood*; Smeaton : *Doctrine of the Atonement as Taught by Christ* ; *Doctrine of the Atonement as Taught by the Apostles* ; Crawford : *The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement* ; Cave : *The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice* ; Bruce : *The Humiliation of Christ*, lect. vii ; Hodge, A. A. : *The Atonement* ; Jenkyn : *The Extent of the Atonement* ; Oxenham : *Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement* ; Symington : *Atonement and Intercession* ; Maurice : *The Doctrine of Sacrifice* ; Bushnell : *The Vicarious Sacrifice ; Forgiveness and Law* ; Randles : *Substitution : Atonement* ; Gilbert : *The Christian Atonement* ; Dale : *The Atonement* ; Barnes : *The Atonement* ; Wardlaw : *Nature and Extent of the Atonement* ; Campbell : *Nature of the Atonement* ; Young : *The Life and Light of Men* ; Du Bose : *Soteriology of the New Testament* ; Thompson : *The Atoning Work of Christ*, Bampton Lectures, 1853 ; Edwards, L. : *Doctrine of the Atonement* ; Lias : *The Atonement Viewed in the Light of Modern Difficulties*, Hulsean Lectures, 1884 ; *The Atonement : Discourses and Treatises by Edwards, Smalley, Maxcy, Emmons, Griffin, Burge, and Weeks, with an Introductory Essay by Edwards A. Park.*

## THE SALVATION IN CHRIST.

## CHAPTER I.

## BENEFITS OF THE ATONEMENT.

THE second division of soteriology has for its subject the salvation in Christ. The supreme aim of his mission was to save us.<sup>1</sup> This fact gives propriety to our representative formula, the salvation in Christ.

However, the subject is much broader than the mere idea of salvation. There are great facts of the salvation which embody fundamental truths of Christian theology, and which must be separately treated. We may instance justification and regeneration. Besides, there are other benefits of the atonement than an actual salvation. There must be prior unconditional benefits, else the actual salvation could not be possible. We are not saved in a mere mechanical way, or by the operation of an absolute grace, but as free agents, and on a compliance with divinely instituted terms. Therefore we must possess the moral ability for such a compliance. But we have not such ability simply on the footing of nature. Our moral state is in itself, or simply as consequent to the Adamic fall, without power unto the repentance and faith necessary to salvation. Therefore we must be the recipients of certain unconditional benefits of the atonement, certain gracious helps whereby we may be able to meet the terms of the salvation provided in Christ.

Thus arises the question of unconditional benefits of the atonement, benefits prior to the actual salvation, and preparatory to its attainment. There is specially the question of a gracious free agency. There are other initial benefits which are purely unconditional in their mode. We thus assume a division of the benefits of the atonement into two classes: a class of immediate benefits, and a class of conditional benefits. This distinction will help us to clearer views of the economy of salvation.

## I. IMMEDIATE BENEFITS.

By immediate benefits of the atonement we mean such as are without any condition in our own agency. So far as the present point

<sup>1</sup> Luke ii, 10, 11 ; John iii, 16, 17 ; 1 Tim. i, 15 ; 1 John iv, 14.

is concerned, this is their distinction from the benefits which are so conditioned.

1. *The Present Life.*—Death was the penalty of disobedience in the Edenic probation. “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”<sup>1</sup> This must have meant a physical death, as well as a moral or spiritual death. Indeed, if we make any distinction, the former must be accepted as the primary sense. Such is clearly the meaning of other texts which relate to the more direct consequences of Adam’s sin.<sup>2</sup> The penalty of disobedience in the Edenic probation must have meant the physical death of our progenitors.

The execution of the penalty according to the terms of the law would have precluded the existence of the race. Our progenitors would have died in the day of their transgression. There is no apparent reason for any delay of judgment except the intervention of an economy of redemption. Without such an economy there are weighty reasons why they should not have been spared. The propagation of the race in a helpless moral ruin, as naturally consequent to the Adamic fall, could not be reconciled with the goodness of God. It follows that the redemptive mediation of Christ is the ground of the existence of the race. An economy of grace anticipated the judicial treatment of the first sin. Eve thus received the promise of a seed which should bruise the head of the serpent.<sup>3</sup> There is deep meaning in this promise. It unfolds into the annunciation to Mary and the birth of a son who should be called Jesus, the Son of God.<sup>4</sup>

No special question of theodicy arises at this point; none which did not arise in the treatment of the primitive probation and fall of man. While existence may become an evil, in itself it may still be a good. Many a blessing of the present life may become an evil; many a blessing does become an evil. It is not therefore an evil in itself; it is still a good. The evil arises from a wrong use of it. Such use is avoidable. We cannot call that an evil which has in it the possibility of much good, and which can become an evil only by a wrong use. Probation underlies our secular as well as our moral life. If the economy is right in the former it cannot be wrong in the latter. A probationary economy in our secular life arises necessarily from our personal constitution. We cannot separate the two. If we would exclude the

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ii, 17.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. v, 12; 1 Cor. xv, 21, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. iii, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Luke i, 30-35.



probation we must deny the personality of man and subject him to the dominance of mechanical forces. This would despoil him of all the better powers of his nature which are active in his secular life, and which may render that life happy and noble. Moral probation is, indeed, a far deeper reality; but by so much MORAL PROBATION. is man the loftier in his nature. Nor can we any more separate a moral responsibility from the moral constitution of man than we can separate a secular responsibility from his personal constitution. The vindication of providence in our moral probation lies in its possibilities of good—the good of moral worth, and the good of holy blessedness forever. Such are the possibilities of that existence which we receive as an immediate benefit of the atonement in Christ.

2. *Gracious Help for All.*—There are two profound relationships of mankind: one, to the Adamic fall; the other, to the atonement in Christ. As through the one there is a universal corruption of human nature, so through the other there is gracious help for all. It is only on the ground of such a universal grace that the actual moral state of the race can be placed in harmony with the accepted doctrine of native depravity.

What would be the moral state of the race if left in subjection to the unrestrained or unrelieved consequences of the MORAL STATE OF THE RACE. Adamic fall? The answer is given in the doctrine of total depravity, a doctrine so uniformly accepted and maintained by orthodox Churches that it may properly be called catholic. The doctrine is, that man is utterly evil; that all the tendencies and impulses of his nature are toward the evil; that he is powerless for any good, without any disposition to the good, and under a moral necessity of sinning. Such is the moral state of mankind as maintained in the doctrinal anthropology which may properly be called Augustinian. On this question Arminianism differs little from Augustinianism, so long as man is viewed simply in his Adamic relation.

If the moral nature is utterly corrupt, and there is no relieving or helping grace of the atonement, there can be no tendencies to the good, no response of our nature to the LIFE AS ONLY EVIL. motives of the good. It is difficult to see how in such a state there could be any sense of moral duty, or any conscious incentives to morality and religion, or any law of moral integrity in our commercial or civil life, or any of the amenities and charities which bless and beautify our social life. From a nature totally corrupt, and wholly without relief or restraint, only evil could proceed. Such a nature would be demonian, and the life of the race proceeding from it utterly evil.

The life of the race is not such in fact. In saying this we do not forget the enormities of moral evil in the world. Much of this evil, however, is consciously committed against a light clearly visible to the moral eye, and against the remonstrances of conscience; so that even here there are manifestations of a moral restraint which could not spring from a nature totally corrupt. Further, these enormities of evil are not the instant product of our nature, but the outcome of a habit of evil-doing; a habit strengthened by long practice, and through which the restraints of conscience have been stifled and the native tendencies to evil intensified. And, despite all these enormities, the history of the race is replete with the evidences of a moral and religious nature in man. That he is morally and religiously constituted is affirmed by the most scientific anthropology. There could be no proof of such a constitution without the activities of this nature; but these activities are manifest in all human history. There is a conscience in man, a sense of God and duty, a moral reason which approves the good and reprobates the evil. Only thus can man be a law unto himself.<sup>1</sup> These facts of our moral and religious nature are practical forces in favor of the good and against the evil. They are such in the absence of spiritual regeneration. Our social life is not wholly conventional and heartless; our commercial life, not wholly secular or selfish; our civil life, not without many examples of moral integrity. This has ever been true, even of heathen countries.

What is the conclusion? We must either replace the doctrine of total depravity by a Semi-Pelagianism or admit a gracious help for all men as an immediate benefit of the atonement in Christ. Arminianism readily accepts the latter alternative, and leaves to any who reject the theory of such gracious help the difficult, indeed the impossible, task of adjusting the doctrine of total depravity to the moral and religious facts of human history. The Wesleyan Arminianism has not left in any doubt its position on this question. The question itself is so cardinal in our system of theology that we here cite a few leading authorities in order to set our position in the clearest light.

We begin with Mr. Wesley himself. "For allowing that all the souls of men are dead in sin by *nature*, this excuses none, seeing there is no man that is in a state of mere nature; there is no man, unless he has quenched the Spirit, that is wholly void of the grace of God. No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called *natural conscience*. But this is not

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ii, 14, 15.

natural ; it is more properly termed *preventing grace*. Every man has a greater or less measure of this, which waiteth not for the call of man. . . . Every one has some measure of that light, some faint glimmering ray, which sooner or later, more or less, enlightens every man that cometh into the world. And every one, unless he be one of the small number whose conscience is seared as with a hot iron, feels more or less uneasy when he acts contrary to the light of his own conscience. So that no man sins because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he hath.”<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere Mr. Wesley declares that through the atonement every soul receives a capacity for spiritual life, and an actual spark or seed thereof.<sup>2</sup>

On this question Mr. Fletcher is thoroughly at one with Mr. Wesley. He says : “ We readily grant that Adam, and we in him, lost all by the fall ; but Christ, ‘ the Lamb OF FLETCHER. slain from the foundation of the world, Christ, the repairer of the breach,’ mightier to save than Adam to destroy, solemnly gave himself to Adam, and to us in him, by the free everlasting Gospel which he preached in paradise. And when he preached it he undoubtedly gave Adam, and us in him, a capacity to receive it, that is, a power to believe and repent. If he had not, he might as well have preached to stocks and stones, to beasts and devils. It is offering an insult to ‘ the only wise God ’ to suppose that he gave mankind the light, without giving them eyes to behold it ; or which is the same, to suppose that he gave them the Gospel without giving them power to believe it.” “ Out of Christ’s fullness all have received grace.” “ We maintain, that although ‘ without Christ we can do nothing,’ yet so long as the ‘ day of salvation ’ lasts, all men, the chief of sinners not excepted, can, through his free preventing grace, ‘ cease to do evil and learn to do well,’ and use those means which will infallibly end in the repentance and faith peculiar to the dispensation which they are under, whether it be that of the heathens, Jews, or Christians.”<sup>3</sup>

The position of Mr. Watson is the same : “ But virtues grounded on principle, though an imperfect one, and therefore OF WATSON. neither negative nor simulated, may also be found among the unregenerate, and have existed, doubtless, in all ages. These, however, are not from man, but from God, whose Holy Spirit has been vouchsafed to ‘ the world ’ through the atonement. This great truth has often been lost sight of in this controversy. Some Calvinists seem to acknowledge it substantially, under the name of ‘ common grace ;’ others choose rather to refer all appearances of

<sup>1</sup> *Sermons*, vol. ii, pp. 237, 238.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, vol. v, p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> *Works*, vol. i, pp. 141, 142, 145.

virtue to nature, and thus, by attempting to avoid the doctrine of the gift of the Spirit to all mankind, attribute to nature what is inconsistent with their opinion of its entire corruption.

VIRTUES OF  
THE UNREGEN-  
ERATE.

But there is, doubtless, to be sometimes found in men not yet regenerate in the Scripture sense, not even decided in their choice, something of moral excellence, which cannot be referred to any of the causes above adduced; and of a much higher character than is to be attributed to a nature which, when left to itself, is wholly destitute of spiritual life. Compunction for sin, strong desires to be freed from its tyranny, such a fear of God as preserved them from many evils, charity, kindness, good neighborhood, general respect for goodness and good men, a lofty sense of honor and justice, and, indeed, as the very command issued to them to repent and believe the Gospel in order to their salvation implies, a

PROOFS OF  
HELPING  
GRACE.

power of consideration, prayer, and turning to God, so as to commence that course which, persevered in, would lead on to forgiveness and regeneration. To say that all these are to be attributed to mere nature is to surrender the argument to the Semi-Pelagian, who contends that these are proofs that man is not wholly degenerate. They are to be attributed to the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit; to his incipient workings in the hearts of men; to the warfare which he there maintains, and which has sometimes a partial victory, before the final triumph comes, or when, through the fault of man, through 'resisting,' 'grieving,' 'vexing,' 'quenching' that Holy Spirit, that final triumph may never come. It is thus that one part of Scripture is reconciled to another, and both to fact; the declaration of man's total corruption, with the presumption of his power to return to God, to repent, to break off his sins, which all the commands and invitations to him from the Gospel imply."<sup>1</sup>

3. *Capacity for Probation.*—While the doctrine of a universal helping grace of the atonement fully adjusts the moral and religious facts of human history to the doctrine of native depravity, and thus saves the doctrine from an inevitable replacement by a Semi-Pelagianism, it also provides for the probationary state of the race. Man is fallen and corrupt in his nature, and therein morally helpless; but man is also redeemed and the recipient of a helping grace in Christ whereby he is invested with capabilities for a moral probation. He has the power of meeting the terms of an actual salva-

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, pp. 85, 86. We add a few references: Clarke: *Commentary*, John i, 9; Pope: *Christian Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 78-82; Raymond: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 316-319; Rosser: *Initial Life*; Mercein: *Natural Goodness*.

tion. All men have this power. It is none the less real or sufficient because of its gracious source. Salvation is thus the privilege of every man, whatever his religious dispensation.

We hold fully the helplessness of man for any religious duty simply on the footing of nature. Such is the doctrine of our article of religion on this question.<sup>1</sup> But, with this doctrine of native powerlessness for any spiritual duty, we hold the doctrine of a universal helping grace. This we have pointed out, and also verified by our best authorities. The necessary grace for the present probation is an immediate benefit of the atonement, and the possession or the privilege of every man. This is the Arminian position.

The subjects of a probationary economy must have the power necessary to the fulfillment of its requirements. There can be no probation without such power. The possibility is excluded by the very nature of the economy.

NATURAL  
HELPLESSNESS.  
  
REQUISITE  
POWER OF  
PROBATION.

Probation is a testing economy in which certain blessings are conditioned on specified duties. Where there is no power to fulfill such duties there can be no probation. It follows that, if our present life is a probation in which salvation is attainable on specified terms, we must possess or have in reach the power necessary to a compliance with such terms. Therefore, if we hold the doctrine of native depravity, we must either admit a universal helping grace of the atonement or deny that the present life is probationary with respect to our salvation. Such denial must imply two things: a limited atonement, with a sovereignty of grace in the salvation of an elect part, which for them precludes a probation; and a probation of the rest which denies them all probational opportunity for salvation. Arminianism readily accepts the issue at this point; but the present section is not the place for the treatment of the questions involved.

4. *Infant Salvation.*—The actual salvation of all who die in infancy is an immediate benefit of the atonement in Christ. The fact of such an infant salvation is no longer a question in any truly evangelical Church. There may be instances of individual dissent, but the predominant faith of such Churches holds firmly the actual salvation of all who die in infancy. There is no need to make an issue where there is nothing in dispute. Happily, on this question there is no longer any dispute among evangelical Churches.

It is true that the Scriptures are not explicit on what is thus accepted in a common evangelical faith. They neither affirm the fact of such a salvation nor explain its nature. Yet when we view

<sup>1</sup> Article viii. Of Free Will.

the question of fact in the light of the divine love, the universal grace of the atonement, and the clear intimations of Scripture, we are not left with any reason to doubt the actual salvation of all who die in infancy. There is profound meaning for this truth in the words of our Lord: "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."<sup>1</sup> There is like meaning in his other words: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."<sup>2</sup> When St. Paul sets in comparison or contrast the consequences of the relations of the race respectively to Adam and Christ, and proclaims the superabounding grace of the atonement in Christ, his words must mean the actual salvation of all who die in infancy.<sup>3</sup> If it be not so, then there is an infinite depth of evil consequent to the sin of Adam which is never reached by the redeeming grace of Christ, and its superabounding fullness, which forms the climax of this great text, can no longer be true.

While infants are neither guilty of Adam's sin nor guilty on account of an inherited nature, yet are they born in a state of depravity, which is in itself a moral ruin and a disqualification for future blessedness. In these facts lies the necessity for their spiritual regeneration. This regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit; and it is a work provided for by the atonement in Christ, as are all the offices of the Spirit in the economy of salvation. Thus it pleases God that dying infants shall be saved through the redemptive mediation of Christ; and thus shall the song of salvation through the blood of the Lamb be forever theirs in all the fullness of its gladness and love. Here is an immediate benefit of the atonement through which very many of the race shall come to the blessedness of heaven.<sup>4</sup>

## II. CONDITIONAL BENEFITS.

1. *Meaning of Conditional Benefits.*—That is a conditional benefit which is attainable only on some specified or appropriate personal action. The meaning will be the clearer if we observe the distinction between immediate and conditional benefits. For the possession of the former no personal action is required, while for the attainment of the latter such action is required. We are born with mental faculties, and may have providentially the best educational opportunities; but the attainment of

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xviii, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xix, 14.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. v, 12-21.

<sup>4</sup> Hibbard: *The Religion of Childhood*; Gregg: *Infant Church Membership*; Mercier: *Childhood and the Church*; Cook: *Christianity and Childhood*.

scholarship is possible only through a proper use of our faculties and opportunities. So there are benefits of the atonement which come to us without any action on our part; but there are other great benefits, such as constitute an actual salvation, which are attainable only on an observance of the divinely specified terms.

2. *The Conditionality of Salvation.*—Our position is this: The actual salvation of the soul is not an immediate benefit of the atonement, nor through an irresistible operation of divine grace, but is attainable only on a compliance with its appropriate terms. We possess or may possess the requisite gracious ability for such compliance, with power to the contrary. Otherwise, the present life could not be probationary with respect to our salvation. If it is thus probationary, then is our actual salvation a conditional benefit of the atonement.

Our secular life is clearly probationary. Mostly, our condition is determined by the character of our personal conduct. To say that we have nothing to do with our secular estate would be to contradict the common experience and judgment of mankind. That some are born to wealth and others to poverty, some to opportunities for success and others in adverse conditions, means really nothing against our position. These matters are merely incidental; and, after their fullest recognition, it is still manifestly true that our secular estate is determined by our personal conduct. We see the verification in the fact that many with the best natural opportunities make for themselves a mean and miserable life, while many without such opportunities, and even against strongly opposing conditions, make for themselves a prosperous and happy life.<sup>1</sup>

It hardly need be observed that the view here presented is thoroughly scriptural. “He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.”<sup>2</sup> As such wasting surely brings poverty and misery, so does a slothful or idle life; “and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.”<sup>3</sup> The doctrine of St. Paul is the same: “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.”<sup>4</sup> The illustration is here taken from the field of agriculture, but the principle is the same in every sphere of human labor.

As our secular life is thus probationary, so may our moral and religious life be probationary with respect to our future destiny. This is a proposition which Bishop Butler has maintained with great

<sup>1</sup> Butler: *Analogy*, part i, chap. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xviii, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Prov. xix, 15. See Prov. xx, 4; xxiv, 30-34.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. ix, 6.

force of logic.<sup>1</sup> On this question nothing remains to be added to his argument. We, however, are more directly concerned with the question of the conditionality of the salvation in Christ; a salvation which includes our future blessedness. This is a question which must be decided in the light of the Scriptures. On the face of the Scriptures nothing seems plainer than this conditionality. It will suffice that the question be tested by a few pertinent texts. We shall adduce such as couple our forgiveness and salvation with certain divinely specified acts or forms of action required of us. Texts which exclude from the salvation all such as refuse or omit the required action are equally in point.

The great commission in which our Lord charged his disciples to preach the Gospel to all men seems in itself entirely sufficient for the proof of our position.<sup>2</sup> Very naturally, in this commission the condition necessary to the attainment of the salvation which the Gospel should proclaim is definitely named: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The faith is conditionally necessary to the salvation. This truth is emphasized by the assertion of the consequences of unbelief: "But he that believeth not shall be damned." Such, indeed, is the teaching of Christ and his disciples from the beginning of his ministry until the conclusion of theirs. Thus Christ went forth and preached the Gospel of the kingdom of God: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel."<sup>3</sup> So, when the disciples were first sent forth with the message of the Gospel, "they went out, and preached that men should repent."<sup>4</sup> Such was the doctrine of St. Peter in his memorable sermon on the day of Pentecost: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."<sup>5</sup> Thus the attainment of the salvation in Christ is continuously coupled with our observance of divinely specified terms.

Let us turn again to the decisive words of our Lord: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."<sup>6</sup> Here faith in Christ is conditionally necessary to the attainment of the salvation which he provided. This same truth is directly emphasized by other words of our Lord. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name

<sup>1</sup> *Analogy*, part i, chaps. iii-v.

<sup>2</sup> Mark xvi, 15, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Mark i, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Mark vi, 12.

<sup>5</sup> Acts ii, 38. See also iii, 19; xxvi, 20.

<sup>6</sup> John iii, 16.



of the only begotten Son of God."<sup>1</sup> There is still further emphasis: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."<sup>2</sup> We may here add the testimony of St. Paul, as given in his doctrine of justification or the remission of sin. In his doctrine justification is intrinsic to the salvation in Christ, but is attainable only on the condition of faith. That such is the doctrine of St. Paul is so well known that a mere reference to a single passage will here suffice.<sup>3</sup>

WORDS OF  
PAUL.

We may group a few other testimonies. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."<sup>4</sup> No proper interpretation of these words can omit the truth of a conditional relation of obedience to Christ to the final salvation of which he is the author. We give by reference another passage in which the same truth is clearly set forth, that our present conduct, especially in its relation to Christ, is conditionally determinative of our future destiny.<sup>5</sup> Thus as we obey or obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, so shall our destiny be one of blessedness or one of misery. The decisions of the final judgment come to the same point. These decisions turn upon the character of our conduct in the present life.<sup>6</sup>

A GROUP OF  
TEXTS.

If it be true that our personal compliance with certain specified terms is required in order to the attainment of salvation, that we have a gracious ability for such compliance, and also power to the contrary, these facts are in the closest accordance with the texts which we have presented. So much must be conceded, even by such as hold the doctrine of moral necessity and the absolute sovereignty of grace in the work of salvation. If it had been the definite purpose of our Lord and his apostles to teach the doctrine of a real conditionality of salvation they could not have expressed their meaning more certainly than in such words as we have cited.

CONSISTENCY  
OF TEXTS  
WITH FACTS.

On the other hand, such words are entirely inconsistent with the contrary position. If no free personal action of our own has any conditional relation to our salvation why should such action be imperatively required, just as though it had such relation? If we are utterly powerless for any act of repentance or faith, or even for any act toward repentance or faith, why should we be required to repent and believe, just as though

NO CONSISTENCY WITH  
CONTRARY  
POSITION.

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 18.

<sup>2</sup> John iii, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. iii, 19-26.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. v, 9.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Thess. i, 3-10.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xxv, 31-46; John v, 28, 29; Rom. ii, 6-16; 2 Cor. v, 10; Gal. vi, 7, 8; Rev. xxii, 12.

we possessed the necessary power? What is the ground of the severe condemnation and doom of all who refuse or neglect the required repentance and faith? If the first fact in the work of an actual salvation be a sovereign act of God in the regeneration of the soul, from which repentance and faith immediately spring, and which are else impossible, why should they be commanded just as though they were possible, and were actually conditional to our salvation? It certainly means much for our position respecting the conditionality of salvation—indeed, is conclusive of its truth—that it is in the completest accordance with so many practical texts which directly concern this question; while the contrary position is in their open contradiction.

3. *The Great Facts of Salvation Severally Conditional.*—We here require only a brief statement respecting each fact, since the conditionality of each is really included in our general treatment of the question.

Justification is declared to be by faith in a manner that clearly makes the latter conditional to the former. This relation can be denied only on the assumption that the faith is wrought in us by an immediate and absolute operation of God. But this is contrary to both the nature of faith and the meaning of the Scriptures respecting it. The faith by which we are justified is a personal act, and is so required under the sanction of moral obligation and responsibility. It is contradictory to all true ideas of such an act of faith that it should be the product of an absolute divine agency. No text of Scripture supports such a view. The prayer, “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief,”<sup>1</sup> can be answered without any such a divine operation. Unbelief is often helped by a clear presentation of the grounds of faith. So by a spiritual illumination or inner quickening God can help the soul to a stronger faith, while the faith itself shall still be a free personal act. There is nothing against this view in the words of St. Paul: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”<sup>2</sup> The preponderance of exegetical authority is against the view that faith itself is the gift of God; but even if such a meaning were conceded, still the interpretation must accord with the nature of faith as a free personal act. We have just seen that, consistently with this fact, God may still give us a higher capacity for faith; but it is only as faith is a free personal act that we can be saved by faith. Take away this character of faith, and it becomes merely a part of a salvation which is wrought by an absolute divine operation, and the

<sup>1</sup> Mark ix, 24.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii, 8.

whole idea of salvation by faith disappears. Yet this is the central idea of the many texts which relate directly to this subject.<sup>1</sup>

Less is said in the Scriptures respecting the conditionality of regeneration, yet enough is said to leave us in no reasonable doubt of the fact. Regeneration is thoroughly distinct from justification in its nature, but is not distinct in its condition. We are regenerated on the same act of faith on which we are justified. There are texts in which the former must be included with the latter, while only the latter is named. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup> There could be no such peace were not regeneration an accompanying blessing of justification. Further, there is for us no regeneration without justification; therefore the former must be conditional as well as the latter. The words of St. John are in point: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born . . . of God."<sup>3</sup> Here the faith in Christ is clearly conditional to the regeneration whereby we become the sons of God. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."<sup>4</sup> But if this gracious affiliation is so conditioned on faith, the regeneration whereby it is constituted must be conditioned in like manner.

Final perseverance and future blessedness, as related to the present question, are inseparably connected. The former, however, will be considered elsewhere. It seems clearly the sense of Scripture that future blessedness is a conditional attainment. He that endureth to the end shall be saved.<sup>5</sup> Unto them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, shall be rendered eternal life.<sup>6</sup> Unto him who is faithful unto death will Christ give a crown of life.<sup>7</sup> Such is the pervasive sense of Scripture on this question. But there can be no such enduring, nor continuance in well-doing, nor faithfulness unto death, without free personal action. Therefore such action must be conditional to the attainment of future blessedness.

<sup>1</sup> Mark xvi, 15, 16; John iii, 16, 18, 36; Acts xiii, 38, 39; xvi, 31; Rom. iii, 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. v, 1.

<sup>3</sup> John i, 12, 13.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. iii, 26.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. x, 22.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. ii, 6, 7.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. ii, 10.

## CHAPTER II.

## DOCTRINAL ISSUES.

THE QUESTION OF THE CONDITIONALITY OF SALVATION INVOLVES THE LEADING DOCTRINAL ISSUES BETWEEN ARMINIANISM AND CALVINISM. THE CONDITIONALITY IS CENTRAL TO THE FORMER, AND CARRIES WITH IT THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE ATONEMENT, MORAL FREEDOM, THE RESISTIBILITY OF GRACE, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF FINAL APOSTASY. THE COUNTER DOCTRINES OF THE LATTER ARE: PREDESTINATION, LIMITED ATONEMENT, MORAL NECESSITY, IRRESISTIBILITY OF SAVING GRACE, AND THE ABSOLUTE FINAL PERSISTENCE OF BELIEVERS.

THESE ARE THE NOTABLE "FIVE POINTS," LONG IN ISSUE BETWEEN THE TWO SYSTEMS. ON THE CALVINISTIC SIDE, THEIR MORE EXACT FORMULATION WAS THE WORK OF THE SYNOD OF DORT, YEAR 1619.<sup>1</sup> IN SUBSTANCE THEY ARE COMMON TO CALVINISTIC CREEDS, AND MUST BE, SINCE THEY ARE INTRINSIC TO THE SYSTEM. THEY ARE ALSO COMMON TO WORKS OF CALVINISTIC AUTHORSHIP ON SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY. THE OPPOSING TENETS OF ARMINIANISM WERE FORMULATED BY THE REMONSTRANTS, A BODY OF LEADING ARMINIAN DIVINES, YEAR 1610.<sup>2</sup> IN THESE ARTICLES THERE IS SOME LACK OF DECISION ON THE QUESTION OF FREE AGENCY, AND NOTABLE RESERVATION RESPECTING FINAL PERSISTENCE. INDEED, ARMINIUS HIMSELF NEVER REACHED A DOGMATIC POSITION ON THIS QUESTION. THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO SUCH INDECISION OR RESERVATION IN THE WESLEYAN ARMINIANISM. NOR SHOULD THERE BE ANY, SINCE FREE AGENCY AND THE POSSIBILITY OF FINAL APOSTASY ARE INTRINSIC TO THE SYSTEM.

THE ISSUES RESPECTING THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT AND FREE AGENCY ARE OF CHIEF IMPORTANCE. IF ON THESE TWO THE TRUTH IS WITH ARMINIANISM, SO MUST IT BE ON ALL THE OTHERS. THE FORMER OF THE TWO WAS SUFFICIENTLY DISCUSSED IN OUR TREATMENT OF THE ATONEMENT. THE LATTER WILL RECEIVE A LIKE TREATMENT IN THE PROPER PLACE. WITH SUCH ATTENTION TO THESE LEADING ISSUES A BRIEF TREATMENT OF THE OTHERS WILL SUFFICE.

## I. DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION.

1. *Divine Decrees*.—Predestination is a specific part of the broader doctrine of decrees. While the former relates particularly to the destiny of angels and men, the latter embraces all events in the history of the universe. The doctrine is

<sup>1</sup> Schaff: *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. iii, pp. 581-595.   <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 545-549.

thus formulated: "God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass."<sup>1</sup>

In the interpretation of the decrees various attributes are definitely affirmed of them. They are eternal and immutable. Their immutability means that events in time must answer to them exactly and absolutely. They are unconditional and absolute. One thing may be a means to another, and so be necessarily prior in the process of divine effectuation, but must be without any contingency. The event decreed must come to pass. "The decrees of God are certainly efficacious." Dr. Hodge maintains this proposition, yet in a manner which seeks to avoid its inevitable implications. "All events embraced in the purpose of God are equally certain, whether he has determined to bring them to pass by his own power or simply to permit their occurrence through the agency of his creatures." An efficacious decree must be causal to the event decreed. A permissive decree cannot be thus efficacious. The two ideas of causation and permission cannot stand together respecting the same event. The mere permission of events through human agency lets in the contingency of free agency, which yet can have no place in the system. If the decrees of God are efficacious in any proper sense of the term, they must be causal to the things or events decreed, and to the sins of men as really as to anything else. They embrace all events, every thing that comes to pass in the entire history of the universe. Here there is no distinction between the physical and moral realms; between divine acts and human acts; between righteous acts and sinful acts.<sup>2</sup>

The alleged proofs of the doctrine of decrees are certainly inconclusive. There is an analogical argument, that, as there is a fixed order of things in the physical realm, so should there be a fixed order in the moral realm. "There is the same God working in natural and moral government." Doubtless: but does he work in the same mode in the two? If he does, the moral must be subject to an absolute necessitation. The repudiation of this consequence is the abandonment of the analogical argument. There is a rational argument, that it is best that all events should be embraced in the divine plan. But the divine omniscience can embrace all things, even the free volitions of men. If this be

ETERNAL.

ABSOLUTE.

EFFICACIOUS.

PERMISSIVE  
DECREES.PROOFS OF  
DECREES.

<sup>1</sup> *Westminster Confession*, chap. iii.

<sup>2</sup> Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, vol. i, pp. 540-545; Shedd: *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. i, pp. 399-405; Henry B. Smith: *System of Christian Theology*, pp. 117-119.

impossible, then the only alternative is their absolute necessitation. This consequence refutes the argument.

Arguments are drawn from the divine attributes. Omniscience requires the certainty of all futurities. Certainty can arise only from an interior necessity or from a divine decree. Therefore, as human volitions have no interior necessitation, they must be made certain by such a decree. But how can the decree give the necessary certainty? In itself it can have no influence upon any future event. The certainty can be attained only by an absolute purpose of God to give effect to the decree. But there could be no freedom in any human volition so caused. Either this argument from the divine omniscience is groundless or absolute necessity is the consequence. An argument is drawn from

the immutability of God. It must assume that the contingency of human freedom is inconsistent with his immutability. If there be truth in this assumption there is no place for a moral system, which is possible only with freedom. But there is no such inconsistency; and the immutability of God, which lies in his own absolute perfections, is just as complete with a moral government over free subjects as it could be with one over subjects under moral necessity. Another argument is drawn from

the holiness of God. As a holy being, he must purpose the triumph of holiness. But with the contingency of human freedom the future could not be foreknown, and the divine purpose might be thwarted; therefore God must subject all volitions to his decree. Now it is certain that he does foreknow all evil volitions just as he foreknows the good; hence, if his foreknowledge is conditioned on his decree, he must decree the evil just as he does the good. But, as we said before, such a decree is powerless in itself, and can be made efficacious only by the divine agency. A doctrine which means, not only that God decrees evil volitions, but causally determines them, cannot be true.

The divine decrees are held to be of two kinds: one kind efficacious; the other, permissive. The former are rendered efficacious by the divine agency in physical nature, and in the sphere of the ethically good, particularly in the salvation of the elect. The latter have relation only to sin. All sin is permissively decreed; all else is efficaciously decreed. Much is made of this distinction in the Calvinistic treatment of the doctrine. It is assumed that our free agency is thus secured, and that God is thoroughly cleared of the authorship of sin. These assumptions constitute a part of the formulated doctrine of God's eternal decree: "Yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin; nor

DECREES EFFI-  
CACIOUS AND  
PERMISSIVE.

is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established."<sup>1</sup> Calvinists must have full credit for these positions, but the positions themselves are fairly open to criticism.

If the permissive decree, as distinguished from the efficacious, provides for a responsible freedom in sinning, and is necessary to such freedom, it follows that the efficacious AS RELATED TO FREEDOM. decree in respect to the salvation of the elect must preclude their free agency. Indeed, it must preclude all such agency within the sphere of the ethically good. Yet the formulated doctrine broadly asserts the liberty or contingency of second causes, without any distinction between the evil and the good. Further, in the Calvinistic exposition of the doctrine, free agency in the good is as fully maintained as in the evil. Now, if free agency in the good is consistent with the efficacious decrees, free agency in evil must be consistent with the same kind of decrees. This means that God might decree sin and efficaciously determine its commission, while yet it should be committed in responsible freedom, and himself be clear of its authorship. Here are serious perplexities for the doctrine.

Other points are yet more perplexing. The decrees are held to be the ground of the foreknowledge of God, the necessary and only ground of his certainty of any futurity. GROUND OF FOREKNOWLEDGE. For instance, he could not have foreknown the sin and fall of Adam, nor the sin of Judas in the betrayal of our Lord, nor the manner of his crucifixion, with all the sin therein, if he had not decreed it.

My first point of criticism is, that the doctrine is inconsistent with the divine omniscience. The knowledge of God CONTRARY TO OMNISCIENCE. is conditioned on his decree. A conditioned knowledge is an acquired knowledge; and an acquired knowledge never can possess the plenitude of omniscience. It may be said that both the decree and the knowledge are eternal, and therefore the latter cannot be acquired. It is true that we cannot go back of eternity in any order of time; but there is a logical priority among things declared to be eternal. In the order of nature the decree must be prior to the knowledge which it is held to condition. Moreover, the decree is a personal act of God, and there must have been an eternity back of it wherein he could know nothing of any futurity. However, the ground of the present criticism was sufficiently considered in our treatment of omniscience.

Further, permissive decrees cannot furnish the ground assumed

<sup>1</sup> *Westminster Confession*, chap. iii.

to be necessary to the divine certainty of the future. A permissive decree is simply a decree not to prevent this or that sin. INSUFFICIENCY OF PERMISSIVE DECREES. It respects simply the divine agency, and is powerless over the human, which is thus left to the contingency of freedom. How can such a decree furnish the necessary ground of the divine foreknowledge? If God decreed the deep repentance of David and the decree included its divine effectuation, then there was the requisite ground of certainty; but could a decree simply to permit the heinous sin of David be such a ground?

Some puzzling questions arise just here. How could God permissively decree the sin of David while as yet, according to this doctrine, he could know nothing of its commission? and how could he efficaciously decree the repentance of David while as yet he could know nothing of the sin for which he should repent? The first question is equally pertinent respecting all other sins. A leading argument for the divine decrees is that future volitions, if left to the contingency of free agency, are pure nothings, and therefore are not foreknowable, not even to God. Hence it is that they must be decreed in order to be foreknown. Such are the declared facts respecting all sins. Then, again, the question is, How could God permissively decree all those sins, when he could know nothing of them until they were decreed?

We here emphasize a point previously stated, that a decree made in eternity cannot in itself be determinative of any event in time. Only the divine agency as operative in time can make it efficacious; but such agency has no place in a permissive decree. How, then, shall such a decree make certain to the divine mind the volitional futurities of free agency? "In the instance of sin, the certainty of the self-determination is inexplicable, because we cannot say in this case that God works in man 'to will and to do.'" So says Dr. Shedd. But it is more than inexplicable; it is impossible, according to the doctrine of decrees. The sinful volition or deed has back of it simply a permissive decree which, as we have seen, is utterly powerless for its determination. Nor can the divine agency go forth to its determination; for this would make God the author of sin, which the doctrine repudiates. Yet it is only by the purpose of such a mode of effectuation that the divine decree can make certain the futurities of sin. PERMISSIVE DECREES NO GROUND OF CERTAINTY.

An argument is put in this manner: It is a truth of the Scriptures that in many instances the sins of men were foreknown to God; therefore they must have been decreed. The fact of such foreknowledge is not questioned. Its truth is



manifest in the fulfillment of prophecies of sinful deeds. But the inference respecting decrees is denied. The argument assumes their necessity to the divine prescience ; but we have shown, not only that this assumption is groundless, but that it is contradictory to the plenitude of the divine omniscience.

The argument often proceeds with special reference to the sins committed against Christ in the execution of the divine plan of redemption. There was such a plan; and there were sinful deeds in its execution. These facts are clearly scriptural. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."<sup>1</sup> These are the favorite texts. It is plain that such sinful deeds were to enter into the execution of the divine plan of redemption. The sin of Judas in the betrayal of our Lord must be included. We have stated the case in its greatest strength. The interpretation of the facts is now the question.

My first point is this : While it was necessary that Christ should suffer and die in order to the redemption of the world, the precise manner in which he did suffer and die was not so necessary. Who shall say that the part of Judas in its precise form, and the parts of Herod, and Pilate, and the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, as severally acted, were essential to an atonement for sin by the incarnate Son of God ? If so necessary there is no accounting for the fulfillment of the part of each except by a divine determination thereto. But there is no such determination in a permissive decree ; and this is the only kind here allowed. The efficacious decree is excluded because it would make God the author of sin.

My next point is, that the facts are open to an easy explanation without any resort to a determining decree. In the absolute prescience of God he foreknew the parts certain men would freely act under given conditions, and in his infinite wisdom he was pleased to appropriate such parts in the execution of the plan of redemption. Thus it was that, according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, God delivered his Son to be betrayed and crucified and slain, just in the manner that he was, by the free acts of men. This interpretation means all that a permissive decree of God can mean in this case. And predestinarians

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii, 23 ; iv, 27, 28.

must accept this interpretation or replace their permissive decree by an efficacious decree. But this they cannot do, for by their own concession it would make God the author of sin.<sup>1</sup>

2. *Predestination*.—As before stated, predestination respects the destinies of men and angels. It includes both election and reprobation: the unconditional election of a part to final blessedness, and an absolute reprobation of the rest to final misery. “By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.”<sup>2</sup> In each case the number is unchangeably fixed, so “that it cannot be either increased or diminished.”

3. *Election*.—Election, in its human application, means that all who are predestinated unto final blessedness God “hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory,” without foresight of any thing in them as the reason of their election. There are in the Scriptures many instances of divine election; but the question is, whether they support this Calvinistic doctrine of an absolute election to final blessedness.

There are instances of personal election to special privileges and duties: of Abraham to be the progenitor of Christ, and the founder of a nation which should fulfill important offices in the accomplishment of the purposes of God; of Isaac and Jacob, instead of Ishmael and Esau, to the heritage of promises made to Abraham; of Cyrus to the work of restoring the Jews and rebuilding the temple; of the apostles to the preaching of the Gospel and the planting of Christianity; but in neither instance did the election include an unconditional predestination to final blessedness. And any assumption that these elections were wholly irrespective of any fitness in the persons chosen for their several offices is purely gratuitous.

The Jews were elected as a nation to special religious privileges and blessings. Thus it was that they came into the possession of a divine revelation and divinely instituted forms of worship, together with many other blessings and privileges.<sup>3</sup> But final blessedness was not an unconditional benefit of this election. If it had been, then, according to the Calvinistic doctrine, all must have been brought into a gracious state in the present life. That many of them were not so brought is manifest in the Scriptures. Further, by the rejection of the Jews on account of their unbelief, their election was transformed into a

<sup>1</sup> The sending of Joseph into Egypt—Gen. xlv, 4, 5—is easily explained in like manner.

<sup>2</sup> *Westminster Confession*, chap. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. ix, 4, 5.

reprobation.<sup>1</sup> But an unconditional election to final blessedness could not be so transformed. Hence no such blessing could have been included among the benefits to which the Jews were originally elected.

There are some texts which, on a superficial view, seem to favor the doctrine of predestination; but a deeper insight finds them entirely consistent with Arminian doctrine. We shall consider two of these texts—the two of chief reliance on the Calvinistic side.

One is as follows: “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”<sup>2</sup> What is the meaning of did foreknow—*προέγνω*? The literal sense is to know beforehand. Some of the best authorities maintain that it never means any thing else. If the word is to favor the Calvinistic doctrine it must have the sense of choosing or electing. But it would thus have much the same meaning as predestinate; while the two terms, *προέγνω* and *προώρισε*, as here used, are plainly different. The element of knowledge cannot be eliminated from the former. It may include definite facts respecting the persons foreknown; as, for instance, that, on the divine call through the Gospel, they would freely accept the offered salvation in Christ, and that they would abide in the Christian faith and life. We thus preserve the sense of divine prescience, which cannot be eliminated from the meaning of *προέγνω*, and avoid the unwarranted meaning of election or choice which the Calvinistic doctrine must give to the term.

With the sense of divine prescience which we now have, all parts of the texts fall into harmony. All who are fore-known of God as obedient to the divine call are predestinated to an ultimate blessedness. “Them he also called”—through the preaching of the Gospel. The purpose of God is the salvation of all who are so called; so that all such are called according to his purpose. In a yet deeper sense the calling is according to his purpose only when the offered salvation is freely accepted. Hence it is that those who freely accept the call and enter into a state of salvation are designated as the called—*τοῖς κλητοῖς*.<sup>3</sup> “Whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” But neither the justification nor the glorification is without respect to a free compliance with its divinely required terms. The

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xi, 17-21.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii, 29, 30.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. i, 24.

preponderance of exegetical authority is in favor of such an interpretation as we have here given: "The best commentators, ancient and modern, are mostly agreed that *προέγνω* is to be understood of *prescience of character*; and *προώρισε* of *determination founded on such prescience.*"<sup>1</sup>

The second text that we had in view is in these words: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."<sup>2</sup> Here, then, is an election in Christ, before the foundation of the world, unto holiness; and a predestination unto a gracious sonship, according to the good will or pleasure of God. Do these facts, as here presented, prove the Calvinistic doctrine of election? A long and familiar use of terms in a given sense tends to the conviction that such must be their meaning. No doubt this is the case respecting the terms election and predestination. For many minds they mean, and must mean, absolute divine determinations. However, there is nothing decisive in such a conviction, and the question whether such is the meaning of these terms, as here used, is still fairly in issue.

In the opening of this chapter St. Paul addresses the saints in Ephesus, and thanks God for the fullness of their spiritual blessings. Though mostly Gentiles, yet they suffered no restriction of Christian privilege on that account. They came into possession of all these blessings according to their divine election and predestination. So much is clearly in the meaning of St. Paul's words. What is the subject of his ruling thought?

Clearly this: The elective purpose of God, even from before the foundation of the world, to admit the Gentiles, equally with the Jews, to all the blessings of the Gospel of Christ. Great prominence is given to this thought in the progress of this epistle. Time and again it comes to the chief place. It is a most grateful subject to the mind of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. The accomplishment of this divine purpose in the evangelization of these Ephesians furnished the immediate occasion for the prominence here given it. The Gospel was preached to them in fulfillment of the elective purpose of God, and all who truly received it came into possession of its blessings according to that same purpose.

But there is nothing in all this which either expresses or implies an absolute personal election to salvation. If we should even con-

<sup>1</sup> Bloomfield: *Greek Testament*, in loc.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. i, 4, 5.

cede the personal election of these Ephesians to an actual salvation, it is still open for us to maintain that it was on the divine foresight of their free compliance with its required terms. There is nothing in the text at all contradictory to this view; and it is in such full accord with the Scriptures respecting the actual conditionality of salvation, that it may be successfully maintained against all the alleged proofs of an absolute personal election. Without such an election, these Ephesians could still be saved according to the elective purpose of God. His supreme purpose in the election of the Gentiles to the full privileges of the Gospel was their salvation. Indeed, this election is a part of his great plan in sending his Son to be the Saviour of the world.<sup>1</sup> Who, in the face of the texts here given by reference, can hold it to be the good pleasure of God to save only an elect part of mankind? With the gracious preference of a universal salvation, every soul might be saved according to his eternal purpose in the mission of his Son. So these Ephesians were saved according to their divine election, in the fulfillment of which the Gospel was preached unto them, and, being freely and truly accepted, was efficacious in their salvation. Indeed, the purpose of God in their election to the privileges of the Gospel was fully accomplished only in their actual salvation; so true it is that they were saved according to the purpose of their divine election. But there is nothing in all this contrary to the truest conditionality of salvation; nothing in proof of an absolute predestination of a definite part of mankind to final blessedness, with the consequent reprobation of the rest to an inevitable penal doom.

NO ABSOLUTE  
ELECTION TO  
SALVATION.

PURPOSE IN  
ELECTION.

SAVED AC-  
CORDING TO  
ELECTION.

THE RESULT.

On the other hand, there are the very many texts which clearly mean the conditionality of final blessedness, which are not else open to any satisfactory interpretation, and which therefore disprove the doctrine of an unconditional predestination. Arminianism is entirely satisfied with this position of the issue.

4. *Reprobation.*—Reprobation is a part of the doctrine of predestination, and means the decree of God respecting the final destiny of the non-elect. As the decree of election absolutely determines the future blessedness of a definite part of mankind, so the decree of reprobation absolutely determines the future misery of the rest.<sup>2</sup>

The word preterition is in favor with some Calvinists. It is preferred as a softer term than reprobation, and as affording some relief from the severer aspects of the doctrine. It is true that in a formula

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 17; 1 Tim. ii, 4; 1 John iv, 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Westminster Confession*, chap. iii, secs. iii, vi, vii.

of the doctrine we have the words "to pass by;" but these words do not express the whole of the doctrine: "The rest of mankind, God was pleased . . . to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin." They were passed by simply in the sense that no atonement was made for them; but this was only a part of the decree of reprobation. The strong word fore-ordained is used. All others than the elect are "fore-ordained to everlasting death." No stronger word is used respecting the elect. The election of a part means the reprobation of the rest; otherwise, God must have been blankly indifferent to their destiny. Nothing, however, could be more unreasonable than such a notion. Hence the true position is with the Calvinistic theologians who adhere to the term reprobation, and to all that it here means. This was the position of Calvin himself: "Many, indeed, as if they wished to avert odium from God, admit election in such a way as to deny that any one is reprobated. But this is puerile and absurd, because election itself could not exist without being opposed to reprobation. God is said to separate those whom he adopts to salvation. To say that others obtain by chance, or acquire by their own efforts, that which election alone confers on a few, will be worse than absurd. Whom God passes by, therefore, he reprobates, and from no other cause than his determination to exclude them from the inheritance which he predestines for his children."<sup>1</sup>

Reprobation is contrary to the divine justice. Of course the reply is, that it means simply the ordaining of sinful men to the dishonor and wrath which they deserve, and hence that it cannot be opposed to the justice of God; that it is in fact "to the praise of his glorious justice." It is readily conceded that there can be no injustice in the infliction of deserved penalty. This, however, does not close the question. It is still open to inquire whether the subjects of reprobation really deserve the penal doom to which they are fore-ordained.

The desert of an eternal penal doom is not in the subjects of the reprobation. What is the nature of the sin which is assumed to have such desert? The answer is obvious: That with which they are born. Whether it is an inherited guilt of Adam's sin or the sin of an inherited depravity of nature, it concerns us not here to inquire. It suffices, that native sin is held to be a sufficient ground of reprobation. That it is so held cannot be

<sup>1</sup> *Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 163. Such is the view of Dr. Dick: *Theology*, vol. i, pp. 367, 368; also of Dr. Shedd: *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. i, pp. 429-431. Many authorities could easily be added.

disputed. The very familiar position is, that, as original or birth sin constitutes in all men the desert of damnation, God might graciously elect a part to final blessedness and justly reprobate the rest to eternal misery, since the reprobation would simply determine for them the penal doom which they deserve. This, then, is the form of sin on which it is attempted to justify the doctrine of reprobation. But the justification cannot be thus attained. The alleged sin lies wholly apart from the personal agency of the reprobate, and therefore cannot constitute in them any desert of punishment. Hence their reprobation would be an injustice.

If it should be said that reprobation has respect to foreseen actual sin, the charge of injustice would still remain in all its force. It would so remain because the actual sin of the reprobate would be as thoroughly necessitated as their inherited sin. It is here that the "passing by" means so much. In the work of redemption it pleased God "to pass by" the reprobates. This is a part of the doctrine. No atonement was made for them; no helping grace sufficient for a good life, or even for the avoidance of sin, was provided for them. Sin is to them a necessity. Such it is according to the doctrines which underlie the decrees of election and reprobation. But a reprobation for unavoidable sin must be contrary to the divine justice.

The doctrine of reprobation is disproved by the universality of the atonement; by the divine sincerity in the universal overture of salvation in Christ; by the universal love of God. It suffices that we here merely state these great facts, as they were sufficiently discussed in our treatment of the extent of the atonement.

The decree of election and reprobation, even in its most vital facts, must have been without any reason in the thought of God. An absolute sovereignty can have no reason for its action except its own absoluteness. But that can be no reason for any one act rather than another. If God had any reason for the exact numbers respectively elected and reprobated, then his decree, which unchangeably fixed these numbers, could not have been an act of absolute sovereignty. If in that decree he had reprobated those whom he elected, and elected those whom he reprobated, his sovereignty would have been just as complete as it was with his actual fore-ordinations. To deny this is to deny that his decree of predestination was an act of absolute sovereignty; for the denial must assume a reason for the act apart from that sovereignty. The doctrine can admit no such a reason.

RESPECTING  
ACTUAL SIN.

DECISIVE  
FACTS.

DECREES  
WITHOUT  
REASON.

It is in the doctrine of predestination that God did sovereignly elect A, B, C, a part of mankind, to everlasting life, and that he did reject and ordain D, E, F, the rest, to everlasting misery. It is also in the doctrine that there was no reason in his thought why he should so elect A, B, C, instead of D, E, F, or why he should reprobate D, E, F, instead of A, B, C. The fact is definitely expressed in the formulation of the doctrine, that the election of A, B, C, was without foresight of any thing in them as the reason why they were chosen instead of D, E, F. Here, then, is a decree of predestination so arbitrary in itself, so vast in the sweep of its absolute determination of eternal destinies, that it well might daze even celestial intelligences, and yet a decree for which, in its most vital facts, there was no reason in the thought of God. The very nature of election and reprobation, as thus disclosed, suffices for their utter refutation.

## II. OTHER POINTS IN ISSUE.

1. *Limitation of the Atonement.*—It is true that not a few who hold the Calvinistic system hold also the universality of the atonement. Whether they so modify the system as to bring it into harmony with this universality we are not here concerned to inquire.

A PART OF THE SYSTEM. A limitation of the atonement is a requirement of the system in its regular form, and mostly has a place in Calvinistic creeds. With a decree of predestination which absolutely determines the salvation of the elect, and an atonement which, in the very nature of it, must save all for whom it is made, its limitation to a part of mankind must be intrinsic to the system. However, we have here only to state the issue, having sufficiently considered the question of the extent of the atonement in our discussion of that subject.

2. *Moral Necessity.*—The doctrine is really the same whether we use the word necessity or the word inability, though the latter seems now more in favor with Calvinistic authors. If we are in a state of moral necessity, then there is for us no free moral agency. Our volitions must be determined by influences over which we have no control. The choice of the good is not within our power, not even within the power of the elect. Only an absolute sovereignty of grace can turn them unto the good. In such a state sinning is

SINNING A NECESSITY. a necessity, and to the elect just as to the reprobate. A state of moral inability involves precisely the same consequences. The inability alleged is definitely a moral inability to the choice of the good. The further consequence is that of an unavoidable sinning.



It is easily seen that such a doctrine, whether expressed as moral necessity or moral inability, is openly contrary to all CONDITIONAL-  
ITY EXCLUDED. conditionality of salvation. But the question of free agency is so cardinal in a system of theology that it requires a fuller and more formal treatment than can properly be given it under the present heading.

3. *Irresistibility of Saving Grace.*—When it is the pleasure of God to bring any one of the elect into a state of salvation he is effectually called. The call is made efficacious through a sovereign power of grace. The initial work is that of regeneration. No act of repentance or faith is conditional thereto; no manner of resistance can prevent it when the hour of God's pleasure has come for its accomplishment. Such is the doctrine as it is formulated in Calvinistic creeds; <sup>1</sup> and such it is as maintained in the ablest theological works of Calvinistic authorship.

This doctrine, just as the whole system, is grounded in an absolute divine sovereignty. It follows that the delays in the ON ABSOLUTE  
SOVEREIGNTY. salvation of the elect, however long, are purely from God's own pleasure: that is absolutely determining. No faithfulness nor unfaithfulness of the minister, nor any act of the elect, can either hasten or hinder their salvation for even a single hour. The all-pervasive sense of Scripture is in open contradiction to this doctrine.

Here again there is serious perplexity for the doctrine respecting the non-elect. The Gospel is preached to all alike. SERIOUS PER-  
PLEXITIES. It is so preached in obedience to the divine behest. The preaching is a divine proffer of salvation to all, and a call to repentance and faith, with the promise of salvation to all who comply. But it cannot be the pleasure of God to save the non-elect, since in his own good pleasure he has unconditionally fore-ordained them to an eternal penal doom and excluded them from the covenant of redemption. They were not given to the Son to be redeemed, because it was not the pleasure of the Father that they should be saved. How then can the offer of salvation be made to them? And how can they be required to repent and believe unto salvation, under penalty of damnation for disobedience, when for them there is no salvation in Christ? The futile attempts of the doctrine to extricate itself from such perplexity really concedes the impossibility. But these attempts were considered and their fallacies exposed in our treatment of the extent of the atonement.

If this doctrine of effectual calling be true it cannot be the pleas-

<sup>1</sup> *Canons of the Synod of Dort*, Of the Corruption of Man, etc., articles x-xii; *Westminster Confession*, chap. x, secs. i, ii.

ure of God that the non-elect should accept the proffer of salvation made to them. The decree of predestination which excluded them from the covenant of redemption and unconditionally fore-ordained them to a penal doom is conclusive of this fact. Further, if in this case God's only law of action is his own absolute sovereignty, the non-elect would certainly be efficaciously called, just as the elect are, if their compliance were his pleasure. Hence we are shut up to the fact that, however God may call the non-elect, or with whatever intensity of words or pathos of compassion entreat their acceptance of his proffered salvation, such acceptance is still not his pleasure. This result is openly contradictory to the divine sincerity.

It is the pleasure of God that all who are called to repentance and faith should obey and be saved. It is, indeed, his good pleasure that all should be saved. The proof is in the Scriptures: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Here is God's gracious asseveration and appeal: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Here are words of yearning compassion: "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." Yet, if the doctrine of an absolute sovereignty of grace be true, God cannot wish the salvation of any who are not efficaciously called. How, then, could he sincerely utter such words? We listen to the pathetic words of our Lord: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Yet, if the doctrine of an absolute grace be true, these words mean no pleasure of the Son to save them; for with such a pleasure they must have been saved. Nothing could have prevented it. There could be no hinderance to an absolute power of grace in that "ye would not." A doctrine which is so openly contradictory to such texts as we have here adduced cannot be a truth of the Scriptures.

4. *Absolute Final Perseverance.*—The doctrine is that, however

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 16; 1 Tim. ii, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ezek. xxxiii, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Hos. xi, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxiii, 37.

believers may fall into sin, sovereign grace must finally recover and save them. It is a part of the system constructed upon the ground of an absolute divine sovereignty. If the other parts are true this must be true. If the decree of election is true; if the atonement is for the elect only, and of such a nature that it must save all for whom it is made; and if grace is irresistible in its saving work, then the doctrine of final perseverance must be true. Nothing, however, is thus gained for its truth, but, rather, much is lost. The disproof of the other parts is really the disproof of this; for, as an intrinsic part of the system, it falls with the other parts.

Alleged proofs of the doctrine, while plausible, are inconclusive. Some texts of Scripture seem, on the face of them, to favor it, but a deeper insight finds them entirely con-  
ALLEGED PROOFS.  
 sistent with the conditionality of final perseverance. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."<sup>1</sup> Such is the assurance from the divine side; but it is entirely consistent with a conditioning fidelity on the human side. The case of Judas is an illustration. From the divine side these words pledged to him all that they pledged to the others given to the Son by the Father; yet there was in him, and therefore in them, the possibility of apostasy. "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."<sup>2</sup> This  
WORDS OF PAUL.  
 is utterly without proof of an absolute final perseverance, except on the assumption of an absolute sovereignty of grace in every instance of a personal salvation. But we have shown that this assumption is groundless. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup> This text is dependent upon the same false assumption as the preceding one for any proof of an absolute final perseverance, and therefore furnishes none. An Arminian can freely use these words of assurance to the doubting, and without any thought of this Calvinistic sense. "Who are kept by  
OF PETER.  
 the power of God through faith unto salvation."<sup>4</sup> Yes, every trusting soul is so kept. But the faith is conditional to the keeping; and as it involves a free personal agency there is here no doctrine of an absolute perseverance. Indeed, so far as this question is concerned, the text is really Arminian, not Calvinistic.

The grouping of a few texts will suffice for the proof of a possibility of final apostasy. A righteous man may turn away to sin, and die therein.<sup>5</sup> The branch may perish from the living

<sup>1</sup> John x, 27, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xi, 29.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. i, 6.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. i, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Ezek. xviii, 24-26.

vine.<sup>1</sup> Judas, one of those given to the Son, was lost.<sup>2</sup> St. Paul, even with his full assurance of a state of salvation, DISPROOFS. apprehended the possibility of his own apostasy, and strenuously wrought against it.<sup>3</sup> Christians are exhorted to diligence in order to make their calling and election sure; for in so doing they should never fall.<sup>4</sup> Such texts as we have here adduced must mean the possibility of a final apostasy.

Arminius: *Writings*, vol. iii; Wesley: *Predestination*, Works, vol. vi, pp. 24-63; Fletcher: *Checks*, Works, vols. i, ii; Whitby: *On the Five Points*; Tomline: *A Refutation of Calvinism*; Watson: *Theological Institutes*, part ii, chaps. xxv-xxviii; Copleston: *Doctrines of Necessity and Predestination*; Fisk: *The Calvinistic Controversy*; Foster: *Objections to Calvinism*; Lacroix: "Wesleyan Synergism," *Methodist Quarterly Review*, January, 1880; Whedon: *Freedom of the Will*, part ii, § 3; Calvin: *Institutes*, book iii, chaps. xxi-xxiv; Witsius: *The Covenants*, book ii; Toplady: *Doctrine of Absolute Predestination*; Scott: *Remarks on Tomline's Refutation of Calvinism*; Edwards: Works, vol. ii, pp. 513-597; Copinger: *Predestination, Election, and Grace*; Howe: *Oracles of God*, part ii, "Decrees;" King: *A Discourse on Predestination*, with Notes by Whately; Mozley: *Augustinian Doctrine of Predestination*; Graves: *Predestination*, Works, vol. iii; Forbes: *Predestination and Free Will*.

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<sup>1</sup> John xv, 4-6.

<sup>2</sup> John xvii, 12.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ix, 26, 27.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Pet. i, 10.

## CHAPTER III.

## FREE AGENCY.

## I. THE FREEDOM IN QUESTION.

IN this discussion it is important to determine, first of all, the freedom in question. If we begin in a negative manner it may help us in that determination.

1. *Not the Freedom of Things.*—There is no freedom in things, and the term has no proper application to them except in a relative sense. A piece of timber which is desired for use may be held fast by the pressure of other pieces. When relieved of this pressure we may call it free, but only in relation to the agency of those who would remove it from its place. The true idea may be more clearly given with the application of the term to things used as instruments. The freedom of instruments is purely in their relation to our purpose or use. A wheel which we would set in motion may be free to turn under applied force, or it may be effectually obstructed. In the one case we may call it free, and in the other deny its freedom, but only in relation to our own agency. My hand is free in this writing, but simply as free from all hinderance to my so using it. Both wheel and hand are mere instruments, without any freedom in themselves, and can be called free only in relation to our personal agency. Hence there is no freedom of things which can mean any thing directly for the freedom here in question.

2. *Not the Freedom of External Action.*—We act externally through our physical organism. There may be the freedom of such action or the contrary. Where there is no exterior restraint, and the bodily organism is in a healthy state, so that every member can fulfill its office, there is the freedom of such action. But if there be an insuperable exterior restraint, or a paralysis of the bodily members which disables them, there is no such freedom. What, then, is the nature of this freedom? Our bodily organism is purely instrumental to our external action, and cannot be free in itself because of its instrumental character. It can be free only as freely usable. Its freedom is simply that of a thing. Such freedom can mean nothing directly for the freedom of choice, and simply concerns our power of giving effect to our

ILLUSTRATIONS.

NATURE OF SUCH FREEDOM.

choices through external action. With the total absence of such power there may still be the truest, deepest freedom of choice, even as it respects the profoundest realities of morality and religion.

It follows that any definition of freedom which limits it wholly or even mainly to the freedom of external action ERRONEOUS DEFINITION. takes the question, and defines a form of freedom never in issue in this great debate of the centuries. Yet such is really the definition of Edwards: "The plain and obvious meaning of the words freedom and liberty, in common speech, is power, opportunity, or advantage, that any one has to do as he pleases: or, in other words, his being free from hinderance or impediment in the way of doing, or conducting in any respect, as he wills. And the contrary to liberty, whatever name we call that by, is a person's being hindered or unable to conduct as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise."<sup>1</sup> It is true that, in addition to external forms of action, this definition may include forms more strictly mental, and therefore more properly internal; but the freedom defined THE FREEDOM DEFINED. still lies in a power of doing as we please. For instance, if we would profoundly study some great problem of philosophy or religion, and have power and opportunity for so doing, we are free; but if either is wanting we are not free. But while the application of this law of freedom is thus broadened, the real question in issue is still omitted. The freedom defined has respect solely to our executive volitions, or the power of giving effect to our choices, while the freedom of choice itself is wholly omitted. Yet this is the real question of freedom.

3. *Not the Freedom of the Will.*—The will is a mental faculty, and one of the constituent faculties of our personality. THE WILL. By a mental faculty we mean a power of mental action. If the mind acts it must have a power of acting. If it acts in different modes there must be a distinction of faculties answering to these different modes. The mind perceives, remembers, reasons, immediately cognizes primary truths, enters into states of feeling, and we find for each form of action a corresponding mental faculty. We thus classify the multiform facts of psychology and generalize them in the faculties which they represent. The method is purely scientific.

We thus determine the fact of a faculty of will. Volition is a specific form of mental action. We cannot resolve it A MENTAL FACULTY. into any other mode. Consciousness fully recognizes the distinctions of perception, memory, reasoning, intuition, and feeling. Between them there can be no interchange of modes.

<sup>1</sup> Works, vol. ii, p. 17.

Therefore they unerringly determine for the mind a corresponding distinction of faculties. There is the very same authority for a faculty of will. Any proper analysis and classification of mental facts must find such a faculty. There are facts which cannot be attributed to any other, and must remain groundless without such a faculty.

But there is no agency in the will itself; certainly not in any strict meaning of the term. We often attribute agency NO AGENCY IN ITSELF. to material things. In this view there is agency in whatever is operative in the mode of force, as in gravitation, chemical affinity, electricity, light, heat. Strictly, however, there is no agency in such things, because they possess no power of self-energizing, and all their action is conditioned on the proper collocations. Only in a figurative or qualified sense can agency be attributed to them. We find the higher, truer meaning of the term only in personality. There we reach the power of rational self-energizing with respect to ends. There is no such power in the will itself. It is simply a faculty of the personal agent. In itself it is without intelligence, motivity, or causal efficiency. The will may be individuated in thought, but we cannot think of it as so acting.

The will is an instrumental faculty for the use of the personal mind. The mind is a personal agent because it has the AN INSTRUMENTAL FACULTY. faculties of such an agency, with the power of so using them. The will is one of these faculties. All, as so usable, have an instrumental quality, and no one more truly so than the will itself. The hand is organically adjusted to many services, but is a mere instrument for the use of our personal agency. In itself it grasps no instrument of work, wields no pencil or chisel of high art. For any such work the power of the will must be put into the hand. But the will is equally an instrument of our personal agency. It never becomes a power in the hand for any mechanical or artistic work except through the energizing of the personal agent. The same is true of it in all forms of its action. It follows that it is not free except as freely usable. The freedom of the will, therefore, cannot be the true question of freedom. This fact means nothing against the reality of freedom, but points to its true location in our own personal agency, and in the result will make it clearer and surer.

4. *The True Question of Freedom.*—We reach the true question of freedom only in personal agency. For freedom there RATIONAL SELF-ACTION. must be a power of rational self-action. The mere power of self-action will not suffice; for an animal has such power, and yet it is incapable of free agency. For such agency there must

be the rational conception of the ends of our action ; a power of reflection and judgment upon ends and motives, and of rationally determining our action in respect to them. Such agency is possible only in personality. It is equally true that the power of such agency is a reality in personality. Freedom lies, not in the constituent faculties of our personality, but in our power of freely using them in personal action. Such power is central to personality itself. Here is the true question of freedom.

5. *Importance of the Question.*—It will suffice that we present this question in a few of its special relations.

The importance of questions of psychology arises from the excellence and value of mind. As a spiritual essence, with high intellectual and moral endowments, it is infinitely superior to matter. Much of our knowledge has its chief value from its relation to mind. The things known may possess little value for our merely secular life, while the knowledge of them may be of great value in furnishing and broadening the mind. The sciences and philosophies have their special interest for us as the creations of mind, and their chief value in the service which they render to our intellectual life. In all the forms of finite existence, as directly known to us, mind is infinitely superior to every other. It is equally true that in the study and classification of the facts of mind, in their generalization in the faculties which they represent, and the determination of the laws under which they work, nothing so deeply concerns us as the question of our free agency. Are we rationally and morally free, with power over our lives ? or are we the passive subjects of some dominating force, just as an animal is subject to a law of instinct ? Such questions rise above all others in the study of the mind. The question of free agency is for us the profoundest question of psychology.

The supreme importance of this question in ethics is manifest. As the results of our moral action are infinitely profounder than the results of all other forms of action, so for us the question of freedom must have supreme concern. Are the virtues which have such a fruitage of good practicable ? Are the sins which have such a consequence of evil avoidable ? Questions of weightier concern we could not ask. Freedom of external action, political freedom, intellectual freedom have no such interest. Indeed, there is no place for a moral system under a law of necessity. If God is a moral ruler over responsible subjects, they must be morally free. The logic of this principle now commands a wide assent. Even where the accepted philosophy or theology really denies the freedom it is yet admitted as the necessary ground of moral obligation and



responsibility. Thus in any and every view it is manifest that the question of freedom has profound interest from its relation to ethics.

Theology gives importance to the question of freedom. Our position on so cardinal a question must influence our interpretation of the Scriptures as the source of theology, IN THEOLOGY. and chiefly determine the cast of our doctrinal system. Under the law of a necessary accordance of the doctrines which compose the system such must be the case. Calvinism is logically determined to a position of necessity by its doctrines of the divine sovereignty, predestination, and monergism. The acceptance of a true moral freedom in man would greatly modify the system, just as the synergism of Melancthon modified the Lutheran theology, which had been strongly Augustinian. Freedom is fundamental EFFECT OF SYNERGISM in Arminianism. The system holds accordingly the universality and provisional nature of the atonement, and the conditionality of salvation. In this matter it is thoroughly synergistic. If its doctrine of native depravity involves a moral helplessness it must set over against this the helping grace of a universal atonement. Thus the fundamental truth of freedom requires the system in the definite cast of its doctrines. These brief statements may suffice for the importance of the question of freedom in theology.

6. *Theoretical Forms of Necessity.*—A very brief statement of some of the leading forms of necessity is all that we here require.

The deepest and most thorough of all is fate or fatalism. Of course, there is fatalism in all forms of necessity; yet the term has a meaning of its own. Fate has long been FATALISM. in use for the expression of the absolutest necessity. Otherwise the term is indefinite; so that it expresses the necessitation itself rather than any definite notion of the necessitating force or law. But under the sway of fate all things are absolutely determined; so that they could not but be, nor be other than they are. Fate binds in equal chains of necessity all things and events, all intelligences, thoughts, feelings, volitions, and even God himself—if there be a God.<sup>1</sup>

Materialism must be necessitarian. The forces of matter operate, and must ever operate, under a law of necessity. Even the concession of their evolution of the Cosmos, with MATERIALISM. mind itself, could not mean any change in their own nature or laws which could lift them into free self-determining forces. If the assumption of their correlation and convertibility, even with the

<sup>1</sup> Krauth-Fleming: *Vocabulary of the Philosophical Sciences*, in verbo; Gillett: *The Moral System*, pp. 21-26.

inclusion of mental facts, be true, they must still remain subject to their own necessitating nature and laws.

Pantheism is a doctrine of necessity. In pantheism God is the totality of being, and works from an inner necessity of his nature, without consciousness, intelligence, or aim. Finite existences, including man, are mere modes of himself, and the product of his aimless activity. Hence, man, as the mode of a being subject to a law of absolute necessity, could not have freedom of action in himself.<sup>1</sup>

Divine predestination involves necessity. Many predestinarians deny this; others, however, avow it, and are logically the more consistent. Much, however, depends upon the nature of the predestination or the interpretation of the terms in which it is expressed. Absolute decrees must have their effectuation in the divine agency. If human deeds are so decreed, they must be so effectuated. It is not here assumed that the Calvinistic doctrine means such a decreeing of all human deeds, whether good or evil. We simply state the implication of an absolute predestination with respect to all events or deeds so decreed. If there is a predestination which does not require the divine agency for its effectuation it cannot be in accord with the determining principles of the Calvinistic system, and may be consistent with freedom and the principles of Arminianism. This brief statement will here suffice, as we have elsewhere considered the question of predestination. We have here presented it simply as a prominent form of necessity.

That motives determine our volitions or choices, and that choice must go with the stronger or strongest motive, is the doctrine of many. It is the doctrine of philosophical or moral necessity, or of moral inability to the good. Some have held it as a doctrine of real necessity. However, it is now mostly held as a doctrine of the truest, highest freedom. We regard it as one of very real necessity. The question must be more formally treated.

## II. ON THE DOMINATION OF MOTIVE.

We have named the domination of motive as one of the theoretical forms of necessity. That our motives determine our choice is a doctrine much in favor with the Calvinistic system. There are obvious reasons for this fact. One is, that it frees our choices from all contingency and gives them the fixed order which is in such complete harmony with that system. Another is, that it may be so interpreted as seemingly to be in accord with

<sup>1</sup>Jouffroy: *Introduction to Ethics*, vol. i, p. 193.

freedom, or at least to avoid the more serious objections that must beset an open avowal of necessity. It is maintained that the motive state which determines the choice is our own, and for which we are responsible. We choose from our own motive impulse, and for the satisfaction of our own appetite or disposition. Much that is plausible may thus be said, but not enough to conceal the necessity that lies in the determining power which the theory assigns to motive.

1. *Choice as the Stronger Motive.*—This is the doctrine as usually expressed. The deeper principle is, that motive determines the choice. It is no longer simply the occasion or reason of the choice, but its cause. It follows that the choice is as the stronger or strongest motive. In the case of two opposing motives of exactly equal force the mental state would be practically the same as a state of indifference, though psychologically different; that is, there would be no free motive force for the determination of any choice. In the case of a stronger or strongest motive all the excess of strength would be so much free, active force, and the only force which could be causal to any volition. Accordingly, the whole doctrine is this: Motive causally determines the choice; hence, in the case of a single motive, it determines the choice; and in the case of two or more opposing motives the stronger or strongest determines the choice.

There is little need of verifying this statement of the doctrine by the citation of authors. To the question, What determines the will? Edwards answers: "It is sufficient to my present purpose to say, it is that motive which, as it stands in the view of the mind, is the strongest that determines the will."<sup>1</sup> We cite a few more words to the same point. "It is also evident, from what has been before proved, that the will is always, and in every individual act, necessarily determined by the strongest motive; and so is always unable to go against the motive which, all things considered, has now the greatest strength and advantage to move the will."<sup>2</sup> These positions are elaborately maintained, while opposing views are elaborately controverted. "If objects of desire have no tendency to move the will in a particular direction, they are not, properly speaking, motives. If they have such a tendency, they must actually move the will, provided there is nothing which has a tendency to move it in a different direction. When on one side there is no influence, *any* influence on the opposite side must turn the scale. Whatever does not do this has no influence in the case."<sup>3</sup> Here is a repetition of the doctrine of Edwards.

<sup>1</sup> Works, vol. ii, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>3</sup> Day: *The Will*, p. 64.

Two principles are specially obvious in the citation : one, that motive determines the choice ; the other, that the choice must be as the stronger or strongest motive.

2. *Ascertainment of the Stronger Motive.*—If proof be demanded for the position so positively asserted, that the choice must always be according to the comparative strength of the motive, all that can be given is that, as motive determines the choice, so the determination must be according to the law of comparative strength. The motive acts as a causal force and immediately produces the elective volition as an effect. Under such a law the stronger or strongest motive at any given instant must inevitably determine the choice, just as the heavier weight determines the action of the balance. But the theory cannot return with the strongest motive so found to prove that motive determines the choice, because, in the inevitable logic of the case, it must make good this position before it can find the strongest motive in the determined result. Further, it must prove that the domination of motive is absolute, just as the domination of the weight is absolute over the turning of the balance, before it can find the strongest motive in the determined result. With such a domination of motive there is no possible escape from the absolutest necessitation of choice.

3. *Necessity in Motive Domination.*—The domination of motive used to be held as a law of necessity, at least of moral necessity, while now it is not only held to be consistent with freedom, but is even proclaimed as the highest law of freedom. The truth is in the former view. To deny necessity is to concede the contingency of choice, or a power of alternative election ; for such a contingency or alternative power is the only contrary to necessity ; yet it is against this very contrary that the domination of motive is maintained.

Most that concerns us just here is, to point out the fact of necessity in this theory. Hereafter the freedom of choice will be formally treated, and in that treatment the proper relation of motive to choice will be shown.

It is claimed in support of the theory, that if the choice does not go with the stronger motive, then it must not only be without motive, but against motive, as it must go against all the excess of the stronger above the weaker. This claim must assume that motive causally determines the choice, and that choice is an immediate effect of the motive force. But if choice is so determined there can be no escape from necessity. The theory cannot admit any power over motives, or any intervention

ONLY FROM  
THE RESULT.

FORMERLY SO  
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PROOF OF  
DOMINATION.

of personal agency whereby the elective decision may be delayed, while the motive state may be changed. Any motive state at all consistent with the theory must be purely spontaneous, and must immediately determine the volitional result. But such a result must be necessitated.

Necessity lies in the very notion of the causal relation of motive to choice which the theory maintains. Choice must have a cause; but motive is the only possible cause; NECESSITY IN THE THEORY. therefore motive must determine the choice. Choice takes one direction rather than another because the motive so determines: this is the only possible account of the particular direction; therefore motive must causally determine the choice. Some, while holding substantially these views, deny that motive is the efficient cause of choice. "Motives are not the efficient cause of volitions. They furnish the material, the occasion, and the end or object of the action; and are absolutely necessary for this. The will furnishes the efficiency, and the form of choice. But the form is to be filled with contents ere volition can be consummated."<sup>1</sup> All, however, that is thus excepted from the causal force of the motive is the will in the act of choosing. But no theory of the domination of motive could mean that the motive force acts directly upon the will to cause the choice. The motive determines the personal agent to such use of the will. Hence the exception of the will from the immediate causal action of the motive brings in no freedom of choice. If the motive causes the agent to choose just according to its strength or bent, the necessitation is just as absolute as though motive causally acted directly upon the will.

4. *A Law of Universal Necessity.*—If motives dominate our choices, there is for us no freedom of choice. The theory can admit no power of our personal agency over NO POWER OVER MOTIVES. our motive states. If we would attempt to control or modify these states we must choose so to do; but we cannot so choose, except as we are determined thereto by a motive. The motive must arise spontaneously. We have no power to cast about for reasons against a present impulse unless we are so determined by the power of a motive which must be on hand, if on hand at all, without any agency of our own. Necessity lies in such subjection to motive. It is the same, whatever the motive, or however it may be designated. A law of necessity has determined all human volitions. Not a single choice could have been avoided or in the least varied; not one could have been added to the actual number. We are the passive

<sup>1</sup> Henry B. Smith: *Faith and Philosophy*, p. 377.

subjects of spontaneous impulses, and without any true personal agency, rational or moral.

There must be the same determining law for all finite intelligences, and even for God himself. In all the realm of mind a law of necessity reigns, has reigned, and must forever reign. Of all actual volitions, good and evil, none could have been avoided ; nor could one have been added. It must be in the future as it has been in the past. Necessity is the universal and eternal law.

UNIVERSAL  
NECESSITY.

### III. ON CHOOSING AS WE PLEASE.

1. *As a Formula of Freedom.*—In the use of such a formula we express a doctrine of freedom in much favor with many who hold the domination of motive over choice. To choose as we please is to choose freely and responsibly, no matter what the moral necessitation.

The aim of the doctrine so formulated is to bring into harmony certain principles which, at least seemingly, are in contrary opposition. For instance, a moral inability to the choice of the good underlies a responsible freedom to such choice. How can such freedom accord with such inability ? Clearly, there is here a perplexing contrariety of principles. Inability is a reality, not a mere word. If we qualify it as moral, it is still a reality, just as any mental or physical inability is a reality. If it be with respect to some doing, any form of inability is a real impotence to such doing. A moral inability to the choice of the good is a real inability which renders the good impossible. This is necessity. It is very real necessity according to the philosophy which makes so much account of our choosing as we please, for the inability lies in an incapacity for any actual motive to the choice of the good, which yet this philosophy holds to be an absolute necessity to such choice. Further, the choice of the evil is the only alternative to such inability.

The reconciliation of moral necessity with a responsible freedom is attempted on the ground of our choosing as we please. If we choose the evil it is because we are pleased to choose it. The only bar to the choice of the good is that we are not pleased to choose it. Thus our choices are our own ; and it is enough for our responsible freedom that they are made according to our own pleasure. In so choosing, no matter what or why, we choose freely and responsibly. But what if the good be impossible, and the evil a necessity ? It matters not, since it is only a moral inability or necessity, and lies in

TO RECONCILE  
NECESSITY  
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our own disposition. It is still true that we choose as we please, and that we could choose otherwise if we so pleased. Even if we cannot so please, the facts remain the same: we choose as we please, and therefore freely and responsibly.

If really consistent principles seem discordant, it is proper, and may even be laudable, to set them forth in the light of their harmony; but it is not laudable, nor even proper, to attempt the reconciliation of really contradictory principles. Such we think the attempt to reconcile a moral inability to the good with freedom to the good, on the ground of our choosing as we please. There can be no freedom to any doing without the requisite ability. So there can be no freedom to the choice of the good in a state of moral inability to that choice.

2. *A Nullity for Freedom.*—This formula is a nullity for freedom, because it simply means an immediate choosing according to the motive state. It cannot mean any thing more, because the philosophy which so expresses its doctrine of freedom admits no other mental fact which can have any direct part in choice. It allows no place for a proper personal agency which may act above any given motive state and rationally determine the choice. If in any instance it may seem to admit such an agency, yet it cannot do so in fact because it really denies such agency. Any seeming delay for reflection and judgment must arise from the presence and action of some spontaneous motive impulse over which we have no control. Choosing as we please means an immediate choosing in accord with our inclination: simply this; nothing other or more.

Such a choosing means nothing for freedom. Nor can it mean any thing, since it gives us no other fact of choice than a motive state and an immediate elective decision in accord with it. As these facts mean nothing of themselves for the freedom of choice, neither can this formula mean any thing, since it gives us no new fact of choice, nor any new office of facts previously known, but leaves us in the old position of choosing immediately from the motive impulse, and without any power to prevent or modify the result. Such a choosing as we please is indeed a nullity for freedom.

3. *Consistent with Determining Inclination.*—All the freedom claimed or claimable under this formula must lie in the fact that the choice goes with the inclination. Any restraint to such choosing or constraint to a contrary choosing would be necessitation, but so long as the inclination determines the choice there is true freedom. Such is the doctrine. But such a freedom

must be consistent with the most necessitating inclination. It is easily conceivable that an inclination might be so strong as absolutely to dominate the mind. There is no power to resist its force. By its own strength it instantly and irresistibly determines the mind to the choice of its end. Is this a choosing as we please? According to this philosophy no choosing could be more so. Indeed, the stronger the inclination, the more thoroughly it draws into itself all thought and feeling; and the more resistless its force, the more completely is it a choosing as we please. Is such a choice in freedom? Yes, according to this philosophy, and in the very highest freedom. "He that in acting proceeds with the fullest inclination does what he does with the greatest freedom."<sup>1</sup> If this be true of any other form of action it must be true of choice. It follows that such freedom is consistent with the most absolute necessity. But freedom and necessity are intrinsically contrary to each other, and never can be coincident in the same volition. Hence there is no freedom in such a choosing as we please.

4. *Indifferent whence or what the Inclination.*—If we are free in our volitions, and responsible for the same, because they are determined by our own disposition, and none the less so even when they are necessarily determined, it matters not what the origin or character of our disposition. The freedom and responsibility rest purely upon the ground that the disposition or inclination is our own, and determinative of our choice. "The truth is that there is no inconsistency between the most efficacious influence in moral necessity and accountableness. Let the influence be ever so great, still the man acts voluntarily, and . . . he is accountable for his voluntary actions."<sup>2</sup> "The moment that the disposition is seen the moral sense is correspondingly affected, and rests its whole estimation, whether of merit or of demerit, not on the anterior cause which gave origin to the disposition, but on the character which it now bears. . . . How the disposition got there is not the question. . . . It is enough for the moral sense that the disposition is there."<sup>3</sup>

Such is the philosophy of our freedom and responsibility, on the ground of our choosing as we please. If our own disposition determines our choice, whatever its origin or however necessitating its determining power, we are thoroughly

<sup>1</sup> Edwards : Works, vol. ii, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> The younger Edwards : Works, vol. i, p. 307.

<sup>3</sup> Chalmers : *Lectures on Romans*, p. 125.



free and responsible. The disposition which absolutely determines our choice might be wrought in us by some exterior agency against which we are utterly powerless, or might be some native idiosyncrasy without in the least affecting our responsibility; for in the deepest sense of this philosophy any choosing in such a state would be a choosing as we please. Here, then, is a choice which no intelligent and upright judicatory would pronounce free and responsible, nor could without execration in the common moral judgment, which yet this philosophy must pronounce free and responsible in the deepest sense of the terms.

#### IV. MENTAL FACTS OF CHOICE.

1. *Freedom of Choice a Question of Psychology.*—In saying that freedom of choice is a question of psychology we do not mean that it is exclusively such. Many other facts have weight in the proof of freedom, a few of which may be stated. Such is the fact of a common sentiment or consciousness of freedom. We feel that we are free in our choices and executive volitions. There is no sense of either an interior or exterior constraint, while there is the sense of an alternative power. If there be not the reality of freedom this common consciousness is deceptive. If it may be so in this case, so may it be in others. Consciousness would thus be discredited, and no ground of assured knowledge could remain. But consciousness is trustworthy, and its testimony to the truth of freedom remains sure against all opposing subtleties. The sense of moral responsibility is a sure witness to the truth of freedom. We attribute ethical quality to our personal acts, and have a sense of merit or demerit for the same, as they may be good or evil. Underlying this sense of merit or demerit is the consciousness of freedom in our personal deeds. The notion of justice must include the notion of freedom. In its strictly distributive offices justice rewards men according to their desert. If sin deserves its penal infliction there must be freedom in the sinning. This is the common moral judgment. Hence it is that the notion of justice cannot be complete without the idea of freedom.

These facts, which witness so strongly to the truth of freedom, are mental facts, and, therefore, belong to the facts of psychology; but they have no direct part in choice as a personal act. Therefore they do not belong to the class of facts which, as concerned in the very act of choice, directly witness to the truth of freedom.

OTHER FACTS  
OF WEIGHT.

SENTIMENT OF  
FREEDOM.

SENTIMENT OF  
RESPONSIBILI-  
TY.

THE NOTION OF  
JUSTICE.

As choice is purely a mental act, or an act of personal mind, it must be open to psychological study. In mental science we study the operations of the mind, what it does, and the different forms of its action. Many of these forms are complex. Few personal acts are solely from one power; and it is only by study and analysis that we find the elements of any complex form of mental action. This method is legitimate in the study of choice. We may treat choice as a single, isolated volition, but such a treatment can never shed any light upon the question of freedom. Nor can it give us the true sense of choice. The specific elective volition is but the completing fact of choosing, while choice itself is a complex act and includes other mental facts. A psychological study of the question of freedom requires a knowledge of all the mental facts which have any part in choice itself.

2. *Need of All the Mental Facts.*—Whether choice is an immediate effect of the spontaneous motive state, or whether it is an act of our personal agency through reflection and judgment, must be decisive of the question of freedom. If the former be the true and whole account of the nature of choice, necessity must be the result; but if the latter be the true account, freedom must be the result. As the mental facts of choice are intrinsic to its very nature, they are all necessary to a right conclusion respecting its freedom. With a part of the facts the elective decision must be an immediate effect of the spontaneous motive state, and, therefore, without freedom; while with all the facts that decision must be from our personal agency in the rational use of our personal faculties, and, therefore, in freedom.

3. *Deficiency of the Usual Analysis.*—In a simple and seemingly complete statement of the mental facts of choice three are given: an end, a motive state, the elective decision. This analysis, however, is utterly deficient. By the omission of a vital mental fact choice itself is placed in immediate sequence to the motive state. In this case there cannot be a proper choice. There might be a higher intelligence in the voluntary action of a man than in that of an animal; that is, the man might apprehend in thought both the end and the motive impulse, which the animal cannot do; but this would make no vital distinction between the two in the case of choice. The three facts of an end, a motive impulse, and a volition toward the end may all be affirmed of an animal. What is distinctive of personal choice arises from the rational use of our intelligence. This is a vital fact of choice additional to the three previously named. Its omission

is the fatal error of this deficient analysis. The error might still be corrected by the interpretation of choice, but only as the interpretation supplied the omitted mental fact. But with those who omit this fact in their analysis there is no reason to supply it through an interpretation. It is not required by the philosophy which can so give the mental facts of choice.

If the elective volition is in immediate sequence to the motive impulse, it must be a necessary effect of that impulse. A NECESSARY EFFECT. There can be no intervention of our personal agency whereby the result can be prevented or modified. A motive can act only in one of two modes: either as a solicitation or inducement to the mind as a personal agent, the end of which he may either accept or refuse; or as a causal efficiency immediately determining the mind to the end. In the latter case there can be no personal agency in the resulting volition. The causal force of the motive determines the action of the mind, just as the weight determines the action of the balance.

If the choice is in immediate sequence to the motive, then it must be in instant sequence—AN INSTANT EFFECT. instant either to the single motive or to the stronger or strongest at any given time. If the motive be a sufficient cause to the choice, then, from the nature of the mental powers concerned, the choice must be an instant effect. Remove the support of a weight and it will instantly *begin* to fall; but it has space through which to fall, and this requires time. It cannot be so with the action of mind in choice if motive be the cause of its action. Here there can be no appreciable time, and at most only its logical conception. What in the case of the weight is only an instant beginning, in such mental action must be an instant completion. If motive be a cause to the choice it must have entire sufficiency for the effect. Hence, in such a case, if it be not an instant cause to a complete effect it never can cause the choice.

The immediate and instant sequence of the elective decision must involve its necessitation. There can be no place NECESSITY THE CONSEQUENCE. for any counter-force which can in the least measure control the causal force of the motive or modify the volitional result. There is no time for the intervention of reflection and judgment. Our personal agency cannot assert itself and act in the case. All is precluded by the instant sequence of the choice to the motive impulse. Hence the resulting volition is the necessary effect of the spontaneous motive state. There can be no freedom under such a law of choice. Such is the inevitable result of placing choice in immediate sequence to the motive state. There is no

place for personal agency under such an order of the mental facts of choice.

4. *The Facts in a Complete Analysis.*—For a complete analysis of the mental facts of choice we require the addition of only one to those previously named, but it is well here to present all in their proper order and with a fuller treatment.

For any choice we require the conception of an end. We use the term end in a sense comprehensive of all objects of choice. Choosing is choosing something: it may be a deed of charity or a deed of fraud, some new pleasure or new form of business, a good life or an evil life. Whatever it is it must be mentally apprehended in order to be chosen. Mere instinct may lead to its end without any mental prevision, as when a bird builds its nest or a beaver its dam, but rational mind cannot so move. It must take into thought the end to be chosen. This preconception of the end belongs to the mental facts of choice, and the logical order of these facts must assign it the first place.

The mind must be in a motive state respecting the end to be chosen. We use the words motive state in a sense comprehensive of all forms of inducement to the choice. There must be some form of elicited interest in the end to be chosen. This interest may arise from our appetites or affections, or from our rational or moral nature. Only in some form of conscious interest in an end can there be any reason for its choice. But choice is a rational act, and therefore impossible without a reason. Hence the motive state which embodies this reason must be included among the mental facts of choice, and the logical order places it second.

If personal agency is a reality, the elective decision must immediately follow, not the motive state, but the judgment respecting the eligibility of the end. This judgment is reached through proper reflection. Such reflection and judgment are necessary to a proper personal agency in choice, and therefore necessary to choice itself. In the logical order of the mental facts of choice the rational judgment is the third.

The rational judgment does not include the elective decision. In the light of consciousness the mental action is not the same in the two cases. In the judgment we estimate the character and value of the end, while in the elective decision we determine our action respecting its attainment. The act of judgment is complete before the elective decision is made. The judgment, however, is necessary to the rational character of the choice, and therefore to choice itself, which in the very nature of it must

have a reason for itself. Thus in a scientific order of the mental facts choice immediately follows the judgment.

5. *The Facts Conclusive of Freedom.*—In respect to the question of freedom, the difference between the two sets of men- THE TWO SETS  
tal facts, as previously given, is as wide and deep as per- OF FACTS.  
sonal agency itself. In the former analysis there is no place for this agency, while in the latter it has full place. In the former the elective decision is immediately from the motive state, and therefore under a law of necessity; in the latter it is directly from the personal agency. In this agency there is the power of rational self-action. In the exercise of this power ends and motives are taken up into reflection and weighed in the judgment. The choice is made in the light of prudence or duty. It is a personal CHOICE IN THE  
act. As personally constituted, we have the power of LATTER.  
such action. There is freedom in such action. Thus the mental facts of choice, as given in a complete analysis, conclude for freedom.

## CHAPTER IV.

## FREEDOM OF CHOICE.

## I. RATIONALITY OF CHOICE.

1. *Motive and Choice.*—Choice is a rational election respecting some end or ends. It is rational in the sense that it is for a reason mentally apprehended and approved. The reason so apprehended and approved is the true motive of the choice. There can be no choice without such a motive. Hence there can be no true freedom in a power of choosing without motive. There is no such power, whatever may be possible in the form of arbitrary volitions. Such volitions cannot be choices, because the necessary motives are wanting. The supposition that without actual motives to the good, or with our stronger motives persistently holding for the evil, a good life is yet practicable through choice, is utterly groundless. There could be no choice of the good in such a state. The assumption of an available and responsible natural ability for the choice of the good in such a state is equally groundless. With this natural ability is placed a moral inability; so that the two co-exist. The latter lies definitely in an incapacity for the proper motive to the choice of the good. If the alleged natural ability, whatever it may be, can command the necessary motives, then the moral inability does not exist; if it cannot, then, respecting the good, it can be nothing more than a power of mere arbitrary volition, and therefore must be utterly insufficient for the choice of the good. No such power, however great, can be adequate to a good life; for such a life must be chosen from its own proper motives.

Thus motives stand between us and our choices, not, indeed, as determining forces, because in our personal agency we have power over them, but as conditioning facts of choice. This is surely the case within the moral sphere, the sphere in which centers the chief interest of the question of freedom. We allege the necessity of rational or moral motive, not to mere volition, but to volition as choice. Many of our motive states arise in purely spontaneous appetence or impulse. Strong incentives to evil thus arise. This is clearly the case with many. These pas-

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sionate impulses and appetences are urgent for speedy satisfaction, and therefore for the volitions necessary to its attainment. Such volitions are inevitable unless we can restrain the evil tendencies through the weightier motives of reason and religion. Have we such power? This is a vital question of freedom.

2. *Rational Character of Choice.*—As choice itself is rational, so there must be a rational element in its motive. A mere appetite or incitement in the sensibilities possesses no such quality; therefore it cannot be the proper motive of choice. Any volition which it may directly induce is merely executive, not elective. Hunger and thirst are immediate impulses toward eating and drinking; but their mere satisfaction is not the true motive of self-government in the case. Otherwise we might always eat and drink just according to our appetite—whenever it craves, whatever it craves, all that it craves. This might do for the life of an animal, but could not answer for the rational life of a man. Were these appetites always in adjustment to our good, then might we always follow them, but only for that reason, and therefore for a rational motive. Only with such a motive can there be self-government through choice.

The same rule applies in the entire circle of our spontaneous affections. Sympathy is usually an impulse toward some voluntary action, but not in itself a motive from which we may act with choice. Before the action can be chosen the end of it must be approved as wise or good. This requires reflection and judgment prior to the choice. Parental affection, followed simply as a motive impulse, often leads astray from both prudence and duty. The proper action can be determined only through reflection and judgment. Only for the reason thus apprehended can the action be chosen. The quick resentment against willful injury is an instant impulse toward the infliction of injury in return, but is not such a motive in itself that the retaliation can be chosen. Such a motive could arise only with such reason or reasons as the moral judgment could approve. Thus, in every view of the case, choice is rational in itself, and therefore requires a rational element in its motive. Hence the volitions which spring immediately from spontaneous impulses in the sensibilities are not choices, but purely executive volitions, put forth for the attainment of the ends of such impulses. It is thus manifest that reflection and judgment must come between our motive impulses and our choices. Only thus can they possess the necessary rational quality.

3. *Rational Conduct of Life.*—Our life is conducted through

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choice only in the use of our rational powers. An animal has motive impulses and volitional power; but it does not choose the ends of its volitions, nor can it, because it is without the faculties for their rational apprehension. Its volitions are immediately from its spontaneous impulses. The operation is without reason. Such are our own volitions when there is no exercise of reason between them and our motive impulses, whatever their end. The intervention of reason, either as intuitively active or as exercised in reflection and judgment upon end and motive, is the one fact which can really differentiate rational agency in volition from the operation of mere animal impulse. As between the two, there are widely different powers, different ends, different motive impulses in operation; but, on the omission of a proper use of our rational faculties, mere impulse is equally the determining law of volition in the two cases. Mind thus moves in the sphere of the animal life. Its only possible movement in the higher sphere of a true personal agency is by making reason the law of its choices.

It does not hence follow that on every instance of a new motive impulse, even where morality is concerned, a season of reflection is necessary. Life does not thus fall into separate deeds, but is conducted according to some principle or law. A good life must be conducted on moral principles or in obedience to a recognized law of duty. A good man may have a sudden impulse toward some wrong volition or deed, but reflection and judgment have gone before and settled the principle to which his present action must conform. With these facts, the instant application of this principle answers for all the requirements of reason in choice.

Personal agency itself is a nullity if without power over our motives and volitions. We have no such power unless we can subject them to reflection and judgment. In no other way can life be conducted through choice. There can be no other rational self-government. The only alternative must be a succession of volitions and deeds in immediate and necessary sequence to our stronger spontaneous impulses. In any motive state other impulses may arise to influence a pending volition or deed; but, unless responsive to the call of our personal agency and subject to its control, they must be powerless to release us from the absolute domination of our spontaneous impulses. If there is no place for reflection and judgment between the motive impulse and the volition which it determines, no life can be rationally conducted through choice.



## II. RATIONAL SUSPENSION OF CHOICE.

1. *Meaning of Rational Suspension.*—Choice, with all volition toward the attainment of the motive end, may be suspended when we are under motive influence. The suspension is rational when for the purpose of reflection and judgment upon end and motive, that the election may be prudent, or wise, or responsive to duty.

What is rational agency, or what can it avail for the higher ends of life, if, under the laws of mental action, there be no place for the proper use of its powers? Where can this use be so important as in the control of mental states which vitally concern the power of self-government? Life is worthy of man only as it proceeds from his personal agency. As such, it must be rationally chosen. Our choices are our most important volitions. Through them we determine the ends of our life and the deeds for their attainment. But if there be no power of suspending choice when under motive influence there can be no place for the reflection and judgment necessary to rational self-government. Our spontaneous impulses must be the immediate causes of our volitions. Hence, the power of rationally suspending choice, with all volition toward the attainment of the motive end, is necessary to choice itself, and the proper use of it a necessary mode of conducting life rationally.

2. *Omissions of the Suspension.*—In the habits of human life many omit this suspension, and mostly act immediately from spontaneous impulse. They do this when the conduct is profoundly important, morally responsible even, and the call loud and urgent for the most deliberate action. Their conduct is simply executed, not chosen. This is possible, though not consistent with the proper use of our rational powers. These powers are not self-acting, but simply an investment which as personal agents we may and should use. If self-acting they could not be the powers of a proper rational and moral agency. Without their use our life is not from our own agency. Without their possession we are incapable of choosing our life or of conducting it rationally and morally. The fact that many live with little reflection or rational self-control, and act merely from the impulses of spontaneous appetite or desire, is often alleged in their reprehension. They should not be reprehended if without the power of postponing all volition toward the end of their appetences when under such influences; for if without this power they are utterly incapable of conducting life rationally.

NECESSARY TO  
PERSONAL  
AGENCY.

OMISSIONS  
POSSIBLE.

3. *Power of Suspension Manifest.*—It is a fact that often under motive influence all volition toward the end is deferred and held under deliberation. How shall the fact be explained? On a denial of rational deferment there are only two modes in which an explanation can even be attempted. One is to account the delay to a mental state of indifference. But this is inadmissible, because the motive state is manifest in the deliberation. No one deliberates on questions of indifference in order to a judicious election. The other is to account the delay to an exact balance of opposing motive influences. Such a state would be practically the same as a state of indifference, though psychologically different. The view is hypothetically admissible on the theory that volition or choice is absolutely determined by motive force. On the denial of rational deferment motive influences are the only forces practically operative in the mind. There is an impulse toward a given volition or choice; and the only force which can prevent this result is a counter impulse. Hence, the continuance of the delay requires for all that time an exact balance of opposing motive forces. The slightest preponderance of either would at once determine the volitional result, just as the heavier weight immediately preponderates the scale. Is this, then, a rational account of the case? The mental state of interested deferment runs through hours and days, sometimes through months and even years. Can the fact be explained simply as the result of an exact balance of opposing motive forces? Such is the only possible account, if we deny the power of rational deferment. Its utter insufficiency concludes the reality of this power.

4. *Only Account of Noble Lives.*—The denial of this power involves the assumption that all great and worthy lives in the various spheres of human activity and achievement, in science and philosophy, in statesmanship and patriotism, in philanthropy and piety, are the formation of volitions in immediate sequence to motive impulses or tendencies, and without any power of personal agency in the proper choice of ends; that all the truer and nobler lives wrought in patience and self-denial, in an ever-enduring fortitude and the loftiest moral heroism, are thus formed. But no true philosophy of such lives is possible with the notion that they are the creation of purely spontaneous motive forces, no one of which, as it may be the stronger, will submit to any restraint or delay under the immediate power of personal agency, but must of its own force go at once to the volitional result of its own impulsion. In truth, reflection

ACTUAL SUS-  
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ACCOUNT OF  
SUCH LIVES.

ONLY TRUE  
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must be the habit, and the highest practical reason the guide, of every such life. Its formation is possible only as the spontaneous impulses may be subject to the personal agency. Over all the exigences of weakness and trial and wrong tendency this agency must be sovereign, and have in command the weightier motives of reason and conscience, which may ever re-enforce the high purposes of a great and good life. Hence, the power of rationally suspending all volition toward a motive end, when under the motive influence, must be a power of personal agency. The philosophy of every great and good life is a conclusive witness to its reality.

### III. IMMEDIATE POWER OF SUSPENSION.

1. *Denial of the Power.*—We here face the chief objection to this vital law of freedom in choice. It is very easy to affirm that the position maintained gives no release either from an absolute dependence upon motive or from its determining influence upon our volitions. But most that may be thus said must be mere assertion, without possible verification in the facts of psychology or the laws of mind. Such assertion may be met with counter assertion equally broad and plausible. So far, if nothing is gained, neither is any thing lost. However, we shall not thus rest the question, but maintain our position on the ground of both psychology and a true personal agency. The result will give us the rational suspension of choice, not as choice, but as immediately from our personal agency.

The contrary assumption is that the suspension of all volition toward the end of any motive impulse for the purpose of reflection and judgment must itself be a choice. Some reason operative as a motive to the suspension is necessary to its rationality. If a sufficient motive be present to the mind it must pause and reflect. Such are the plausible assertions in the case. Their meaning is that any rational deferment of elective or executive volition, with all the intervening rational action, is absolutely dependent upon motive and necessarily determined according to its stronger impulse. On the truth of this assumption the mind, when under motive impulse, cannot pause and reflect, nor take account of any relative fact or principle which might influence the pending volition, except another motive intervene to determine the rational action. But such motive must be assumed to arise spontaneously, if at all. There can be no delay and no casting about for any reason counter to the present inclination, simply as the rational action of the personal agent. If so conditioned by spontaneous motive influence, why should he, or how can

he, pause and reflect whether there be any reason against following a present inclination, except some spontaneous impulse so determine his mental action?

2. *A Denial of Personal Agency.*—If such be the law of mental action in this case, our volitions are not in any true sense from our own agency, but are immediately determined by our purely spontaneous motive states. Indeed, the mind is no longer a rational agent, because without the power of rational action. The fact is not other because some spontaneous impulse, opportunely arising, may determine the mind to pause, or even turn it away to reflection and the apprehension of reasons counter to the present inclination. There is still wanting the essential power of rational self-movement. The mind cannot act from itself as a rational agent, but is absolutely conditioned by its spontaneous impulses. The irrational soul of an animal is not more dependent upon the impulse of instinct, or passive under its dominance. That the mental movement determined by the spontaneous motive is to reflection and the apprehension of reasons counter to the present inclination brings no relief, because even in such facts the mind is none the less dependent upon the spontaneous motive or passive under its power. This is the fact of necessitation in the case, and the fact exclusive of a true rational agency, whatever the mental action induced.

Thus a proper rational agency is excluded. There is something far higher and other in such agency than is possible under a law of absolute dependence upon purely spontaneous motives. It consists in an intrinsic power of immediate self-movement, a power to pause and reflect when under the impulse of motive, a power whereby the mind may turn itself to such facts or principles as may concern the present inclination, or call them up and hold them under deliberation. For all this there is required no other power or reason than what is ever at the command of a rational agent, so long as his proper agency remains. But an absolute dependence upon spontaneous motive impulse for any reflection or judgment, while under such impulse, utterly precludes this power, and leaves us to be driven helplessly onward in an endless succession of motive states, while our volitions are as determinately swayed by these states as are the orbital movements of the planets by the forces of gravitation. We have no power over such states; no power against them, or to modify them; and, therefore, no power to avoid or in the least modify any volition which they may induce; but if we have not such power we have no true rational agency; it is really

NECESSARY  
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PERSONAL  
AGENCY.

RATIONAL  
AGENCY  
EXCLUDED.

NO POWER  
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and utterly excluded. Now any position which denies to personal mind such an agency, or any power necessary to it, must be a false position. Hence rational agency is, and must be, independent of spontaneous impulses for its rational action when under motive influence.

The rational deferment of all volition toward the motive end when under motive impulse is, as previously stated, for the purpose of reflection and judgment upon impulse and end, that the action in the case may be judicious or wise. It is the proper course for an agent rationally constituted and responsible for his volitions. Often the instant application of a principle previously settled may answer for the law of rational conduct. In many cases the proper action may be intuitively or instantly clear. But when it is not clear, as often it is not, our conduct is rational only as we take time and give the question such reflection as may be requisite to a proper judgment.

3. *Suspension of Choice not Choice.*—This deferment is not choice. The mental action is not the same in the two cases. The question may be appealed to consciousness or tested by the most searching analysis of all the mental facts concerned, and the result will verify our position. Choice has its own mental form, well known in consciousness, but really known only there. Simply as an elective volition it is the act of an instant. The pre-elective rational action is of the choice simply as the prerequisite of its rational quality. Yet the relation is vital to choice itself. But in no sense do our views identify the one with the other as mental acts. They are not the same. In the light of consciousness they are distinct and different.

4. *The Immediate Power Manifest.*—Consciousness is witness to the fact that this pre-elective rational action is immediately from the rational agency itself. The power so to act is intrinsic and necessary to such agency. It is an ever-usable power so long as the agency remains. We assert only the same truth when we affirm that a rational agent can act rationally. With this true and simple statement, our position scarcely requires illustration or proof; for to admit the reality of such an agency, and then deny its necessary power, is a contradiction. Who would attempt a philosophy of choice or pretend to build up a doctrine of responsible freedom on the denial of a true rational agency to the mind? But with the admission of this agency it must be admitted that the mind can act rationally. Hence it must have the power of so acting immediately from itself.

Objections may be urged against the reality of this power in

view of the blindness of ignorance, the perversion of error, the enervation of vice, the thralldom of evil habit; but these are incidental questions or side issues which in no sense antagonize our position. There are such instances, as many facts witness. Hence it is clear that rational agency may be greatly enfeebled, or, possibly, entirely overborne, by the force of evil habit and vicious tendency; but this does not affect our position, for it is affirmed of a true rational agency, and not of a mind in such a state of thralldom from a wrong use of its powers that its proper agency no longer remains. There are results of benefit to freedom from proper rational and moral conduct, as well as results of evil from wrong conduct. By a right use of the powers of our personal agency—a use just according to its constitution and our own obligation—we may reach the highest measure of self-command and moral freedom.

We are not constantly in some special motive state, or under some strong impulse, urgent for the volition which will carry us to its end. In the hours of mental quietude and self-command, duty in all its relations and requirements may be calmly considered and rules of right conduct settled. We may thus give to the purpose of a reflective and upright life the strength and persistence of habit. We may so make it a law of life always to pause and reflect under any doubtful solicitation, that this law shall become an immanent state of our mind. It will thus be easy for us, even when suddenly brought under strong impulse or temptation, to pause and reflect and so take to ourselves strength from the weightiest reason against the wrong action to which we may be solicited. For so doing we need only the power which is intrinsic to rational agency.

Thus the proper rational action when under motive impulse, the reflection and judgment upon end and impulse which should precede any volition toward the end, and must precede it if life is to be conducted rationally, is from an immediate power of rational self-action. The denial of this power is the denial of rational agency itself. Logically, the consequence must be a helpless passivity of life under an absolute law of purely spontaneous motive impulse.

#### IV. POWER OVER MOTIVES.

With an immediate power to postpone all volition toward any motive end, and to take end and motive into reflection and judgment, we have power over our motives. Power over motives is power over choices. Power over choices is true freedom in choice.

An analytic presentation of the laws and facts of mind with which this power is vitally concerned will evince its reality, and also conclude its sufficiency as a law of freedom in choice. It is proper, therefore, to treat, severally and in order, motive states of mind, laws of motive states, power over laws of motive states, power over motive states and motives.

ANALYTIC  
STATEMENT.

1. *Motive States of Mind.*—Any form of conscious interest operative as an incentive toward any volition in order to the attainment of an end is a motive state. The fact is the same whether the interest arises in any one of our manifold sensibilities or in the rational or moral part of our nature. There is no motive state without some form of conscious interest in some object or end.

2. *Laws of Motive States.*—There are certain laws of motive states. The same laws are common to all such states. Their place and value in the question of freedom will appear as we proceed with the discussion.

Motive states of mind are under a law of objective relation. They can possess no motive quality except on the cognitive view of their object or end. There are purely spontaneous appetences, which spring from our constitution, and would spring all the same were we without any notion of objects which might satisfy them. But in such case they could not, in any proper sense, be motive states, because without tendency toward any volition or deed in order to their satisfaction. Such a tendency is impossible without the notion of something satisfying. The same law applies to truths or conceptions of the reason, whether philosophic, moral, or religious. Such truths, however ideal or impersonal as conceived, are often truths of the profoundest conscious interest and the most forceful, practical tendency, but only with the notion of some end to be achieved. All objective motivity is powerless over the subjective in any practical sense, except as in mental conception and with the notion of an end. Such is one law of motive states of mind.

FIRST LAW.

Motive states are spontaneous on their proper objective relation. With a subjective and objective motivity in correlation, then on the perception or conception of the motive object there arises an impulse or tendency toward some volition or deed answering to the motive state. Thus the sense of hunger and thirst, with the notion of food and water, immediately tends toward eating and drinking. The sense of moral obligation and responsibility, with the notion of some deed required as a duty, becomes an impulse toward its performance. The principle is the same in all forms of conscious interest in motive ends, whether of the sensibilities or the

SECOND LAW.

reason. Thus motive states spontaneously arise and remain with the proper conception of their objects or ends. We have no immediate will-power either to prevent or repress them. They are necessary facts under their own law. This is no concession to the theory of the domination of motive over volition or choice. Our position is not broadly that we have no volitional power over these motive states, either to prevent or repress or change them, but qualifiedly that we have no such immediate power. This is because they are spontaneous and necessary states under their own law. That they are such will be found wholly to the advantage of a true freedom in choice.

The third law of motive states is not so much a distinct law as a special fact of such states consequent on the first law.

THIRD LAW. If motive states are under a law of objective relation, and possible only on the mental conception of their proper object or end, then by consequence they must terminate with this conditioning relation. So soon as the motive object or end of these states is dismissed from thought they must cease to have any motive quality or tendency.

3. *Power over the Laws of Motive States.*—Power over the laws of motive states is simply power over the practical relation of the mind to motive objects. If a present object must, of its own nature and force, so occupy the mind and fix the attention that we can neither dismiss it nor call into thought and reflection any other, we have no power to determine the relation of our mind to such objects; but if we can dismiss a present object, or replace it in the mind with another, or call another into thought and reflection, then the power is real and sufficient. Have we such a power? This is really the question, whether, as rational agents, we can use our mental faculties according to their own nature and office. But, as correctly so stated, the question determines for itself an affirmative answer.

Rational agency requires a certain complex of usable faculties. There must be a synthesis of rational intelligence, sensibility, and will. Of course there can be no such agency without intelligence. Sensibility is necessary to a conscious interest in the ends of action. Without such interest there could be no personal action; all possible action would be purely spontaneous or automatic. Neither angel nor archangel, however removed from the lower forms of human sensibility, nor even God himself, could be a rational agent without a capacity for conscious interest in the ends of volition or choice. There must be such an interest if only in the purest philosophic or moral reason.

COMPLEX OF  
USABLE FAC-  
ULTIES.



Of course there must be a will, without which there is no proper agency, much less rational agency.

Man is a rational agent with these three forms of attribute. But the intelligence is not the agent; the sensibility or emotional nature is not the agent; the will is not the agent. MAN THIS A  
RATIONAL  
AGENT. Man himself, as so constituted, is the agent. He is a rational agent because with such faculties he can act rationally. While a rational agent only by virtue of these faculties, yet is he above them with power to use them. They have in relation to him an instrumental quality and function, and he can use them for their appropriate ends, just as he may use any bodily organ or any implement or tool. Mental faculties, in the very nature of them, are usable faculties. Without the power of using them the proper notion of rational agency is utterly excluded.

The will, as a usable faculty, is most proximate to the agent, and is immediately at his command. This does not imply THE WILL. an absolute power of volition any more than my voluntary use of a pen in this writing implies an absolute will power over it. Volition, in the lowest sense, is conditioned by some spontaneous mental state; as merely for the attainment of the end of some appetite or impulse, by the notion of the end; as elective, by the apprehension of a reason for the choice. But nothing so conditioning volition is inconsistent with an immediate power of the agent over the will. On the proper occasion he may so use it, and through volition control or use whatever is subject to him as an agent.

Thus he may use his intellectual faculties. Thinking is often spontaneous, or, at least, not consciously voluntary. It USE OF THE  
INTELLECT. is none the less true that through the will we have the voluntary control of our mental faculties and may freely use them according to their own nature and office. Thus we may select the subject of thought and give it conscious attention and profound study. We may dismiss one subject and take up another. Every rational agent can do this; every one who conducts life rationally must do it. The question of this power may be appealed to the facts of consciousness, and they will verify its reality. TESTIMONY OF  
ACHIEVE-  
MENTS. The achievements of rational thought conclude the case. There are only two modes of mental activity: one spontaneous, the other by intentional origination and direction. Will the former answer for a philosophy of thought, as manifest in human history? Is not the latter a necessity to that philosophy? Whence the civilizations of the race? Whence the facts of the higher civilizations, the arts and inventions, the sciences and philosophies, the

literature, the high achievements in the sphere of æsthetic art, the masterly statesmanship? Not from spontaneous mental reverie, but from the voluntary use of mental faculties. These marvelous achievements were possible only as men could freely determine their mental activities. This is conclusive of the power which we maintain.

With such a power in the use of our mental faculties we can direct attention and thought to one object or another, or dismiss one and call up another. Thus we can determine the relations of our mind to motive objects; whether a present object shall hold its place and engage the entire attention, or what other shall come into attention with it or entirely replace it; whether one object or another shall be in the mental apprehension, with its immediate power over the subjective motivity.

But in these very relations are the laws of our motive states. Hence, power over these relations is power over the laws of motive states, and, therefore, over these states. With a motive object in conception there is a spontaneous motive state in correlation with it; with a dismissal of the object from thought, a termination of the motive state; with its replacement by a different object, a change in the motive state. Thus, with power over the relations of our mind to motive objects, we can determine our own motive states. The result is just according to the laws of these states. Such a power we have, however metaphysical speculation and subtlety may seek or even seem to obscure it. The power itself is intrinsic to personal agency, original and simple, indefinable and inexplicable, yet none the less real and manifest.

Any one may readily test and verify the reality of this power. Some motive object comes into your perception or mental conception. It matters not how it comes, but only that it is there. Being there, it moves upon the correlate appetence or affection, and draws you into a motive state. This state, spontaneously arising under its own law, is itself an impulse toward some volition or deed for the attainment of the motive object, or the satisfaction of the appetence or affection which it has awakened; but no law of your mind binds you to this state or to any volition or deed toward which it may tend. You can separate yourself from the motive object or dismiss it from thought, and thus put it out of the relation to your mind which is necessary to its motive influence; or you can take into thought and reflection some fact or truth of counter motive influence, and the former will yield to the latter. You may suddenly become the sub-

ject of a spontaneous impulse or tendency which you would not follow. Your state of mind against it may be simply a cool judgment, while the motive state is full of fiery impulse; but, however intense the impulse or cool the judgment, you can take time to reflect. This you can do as a rational and responsible agent. Then you can summon into thought and conscience the weighty reasons of prudence and piety against the indulgence of the present impulse. These reasons, so apprehended and meditated, will give you a counter motive state. This state may have far less intensity than the former, and yet be infinitely weightier in the view of reason and conscience. You are called to some duty. Your mental apprehension of it may be lacking in clearness and vigor, while there is but slight response of moral feeling. Other feelings may be strongly adverse. In this state you can take time and call into meditation the weighty reasons of obligation and spiritual well-being which urge the duty. These reasons, so meditated, will bring the responsive disposition.

RESPECTING  
SOME DUTY.

4. *Power over Motives.*—We thus have power over motives. As motive is something more than a mere spontaneous appetite or impulse, and includes a rational element, power over motives is more than power over mere motive states. Yet the laws are the same in the two cases. Both classes are spontaneous under the same law of objective relation. This relation is determined for both simply by taking the motive object into proper mental apprehension. As we thus apprehend a rational or moral motive object we realize in experience a rational or moral motive. Through such higher and more imperative motives we have power over the lower appetites and desires. We are free, or have the power of freedom, from a dominating law of spontaneous appetite or impulsive passion. A far higher and better life must be within our power as rational and moral agents.

MOTIVES UNDER  
SAME  
LAWS.

If without power over motive states, and over motives as requisite to the choice of the rational and the good, our life must be spontaneous and flow with the current of our lower tendencies; while with this power we may subject it to rational and moral control. Over the impulses of appetite and passion we may enthrone the rational and the moral. How this may be done has already been explained. We are not helplessly passive under any one spontaneous impulse or any stronger or strongest impulse in the coincidence of two or more of opposite tendency. We have no immediate power of volition to prevent or repress such a motive state; but we have immediate power to defer any volition or deed toward its end. Then through reflection and judgment we

CENTRAL POWER OF FREE-  
DOM.

may realize the motives of reason and conscience, and direct our life from them.

Is this power ever used? So it may be asked in objection. We have previously recognized the fact of a widely prevalent omission of its use. The question, however, or the objection which it clothes, is irrelevant. For the present we are simply maintaining the reality of this power, not its use. But, as a question of fact, it has been used, and in instances innumerable. If once used it is a common usable power of personal agency. If never used, then never in all the history of the ages has any man in a single instance rationally determined his own conduct. Such is the implication of that irrelevant objection to our doctrine of rational agency. There is no need of further refutation or reply; else we might again array the great facts of civilization, as practicable only through a rational use of the faculties of our personal agency, and the many instances of rational and moral self-direction in the formation of great and good lives, as forever concluding the reality of this power, and also its very frequent use.

#### V. SUFFICIENT MOTIVES FOR REQUIRED CHOICES.

For required choices there must be sufficient motives. We cannot otherwise have true freedom. This is consequent to the rational nature of choice. We choose for a motive rationally apprehended. When the requisite motive is not present to the mind, or within its power to command, there is no proper sphere of choice. With alternative ends of equal interest simply to the sensibilities, we may decide for either or against both, but by an arbitrary volition, not a choice. If we may combine with either a rational element, or a higher rational element with the one than with the other, then may we choose it. If against the impulses of the sensibilities or the motives of secular interest we may command a motive of duty, then we may choose the end of this motive.

Hence the law of freedom is this: for the required choices of prudence and duty we may command the proper motives. The principles of this law have already come into the discussion; most of them sufficiently so. Therefore we further require little more than the proper application. Yet a present analytic statement of the cardinal facts of the question will be helpful to clearness of view. The law of freedom, as given, requires: 1. Sufficient objective motives for the choices of prudence and duty; 2. A capacity for the actual motives of such choices; 3. Power to place the mind in such relation to the objective motives that we may realize in experience the actual motives.

CONCERNING  
THE USE OF  
THIS POWER.

SUCH MOTIVES  
A NECESSITY.

THE LAW OF  
FREEDOM.

1. *Objective Motives.*—The reality of the requisite objective motives none will question. A life conducted with prudence or reason is, with all who think, far higher and better than a life determined by spontaneous appetence or passion. Duty asserts its own superiority of excellence and authority. These facts clearly mean the requisite objective motives.

2. *Rational Motives.*—A capacity for the rational motives of life will scarcely be questioned. It cannot be without questioning the fact of rational agency itself. Agency, in whatever grade, must have every capacity or faculty necessary to it. We are rational agents only as we have the ability to conduct life rationally. But, as previously shown, life can be so conducted only as it may be chosen. It can be chosen only from its own rational motives. These motives are such, not simply as objective, but only as realized in experience. This requires something more than a mere intellectual conception of the rational ends of life. It is still true that there can be no actual motive without some form of conscious interest in the end of choice.

ELSE NO  
RATIONAL  
AGENCY.

Hence the rational ends of life, as mentally conceived, must be realized in a conscious interest therein. Only with such interest can they be rationally eligible. As a question of fact such ends of life have with many minds a consciously realized eligibility. One instance of a life rationally conducted must conclude the subjective capacity for these rational motives. There are innumerable instances of the kind.

MOTIVE ONLY  
WITH ELICITED  
INTEREST.

3. *Moral and Religious Motives.*—We here reach the profoundest issues of this question. It is here, too, that objections will be most strenuously urged against our position. We firmly and confidently maintain it. There must be a capacity for the motives of morality and religion, else there can be no actual motive to the choice of either. Without the proper motive neither can be chosen. Without the choice neither is possible. In this case certain rational ends of life, as below the moral and spiritual, would be the limit of our agency. It could not rise into the moral and religious sphere. No agency can rise a grade above its capabilities. As the agency of rational mind is impossible to mere animal instinct, so would moral and religious agency be impossible to man if without a capacity for the necessary moral and religious motives. There must be this capacity, either as native or gracious, else we cannot be under obligation to the choice of either. As mere animal instinct cannot be answerable to the laws of a rational life, no more could we be answerable to the laws of a good life if without a capacity for the necessary motives to its choice.

CAPACITY FOR  
SUCH MOTIVES.

We are not unmindful of the relations of this question to Christian theology. It is easy to array the doctrine of a native depravity against this capacity for the motives of morality and religion. There is truth in both ; and neither is less a truth for the reason of the other. The capacity for moral and religious motives is none the less sufficient for a proper moral and religious agency because of its gracious original. It is a gracious endowment of fallen humanity through a redemptive economy.

We appeal the question of this capacity to the moral facts of human history, and none the less confidently because of the prevalent facts of moral darkness, stolidity, and vice. The moral life of humanity is double—a life within a life. With all the facts of evil there are the more widely prevalent facts which evince the common sense of moral obligation and responsibility, and the common appreciation of obedience to the duties of morality and religion as the supreme excellence and wisdom of human life. These facts require, as their necessary source, a subjective state which constitutes a capacity for the motives of morality and religion, and hence conclude its reality. As for the question of moral freedom, it is indifferent whether this capacity be native or gracious. For the consistency of Scripture truth it must have a gracious original.

The motives of morality and religion are the paramount motives of human life. They are such, not only in intrinsic quality, which few question and the moral consciousness of humanity affirms, but also as realizable in experience. The possibility of this realization lies in our actual capacity for these motives as previously shown. Hence, in the realizations of experience the good may have for us the highest eligibility and be chosen against the enticements of evil.

4. *Power of Commanding the Requisite Motives.* — Then the power of rational and moral agency, as previously explained, gives us the command of these paramount motives of life. It is simply the power of placing the mind in practical relation to the great truths which embody these motives. We can determine our profound attention to these truths and study them just as we do in the case of secular questions. Our moral motives will answer to these truths when so apprehended and meditated. Conscience and moral reason are realities with every one yet under a law of moral probation. They only wait for the proper reflection to rise into activities of a profound conscious interest in the ends which they concern. In these activities shall thus be realized in experience the

AS RELATED TO  
THEOLOGY.

MORAL FACTS  
OF HUMAN  
HISTORY.

PARAMOUNT  
MOTIVES.

THE POWER  
RESTATED.

CONSCIENCE  
AND MORAL  
REASON.

actual motives to the choice of the good. Thus, the thoughtless can pause and reflect, while moral duty and the interests which hinge upon it shall rise into view as of all things the most imperative and important. The worldly mind can deeply concern itself with heavenly things. The sensual can apprehend the higher and diviner law of temperance and purity. The covetous and selfish can ponder the duty of charity and realize its imperative claim. The hard and cruel can yield to the pathos of kindness and sympathy.

This is no doctrine of instantaneous self-regeneration, nor of self-regeneration in any sense. It is simply the law under which we can realize the paramount eligibility of the good. The power is a gracious endowment. Also the divine Spirit is ever present for our aid, and often active as a light in the moral reason and a quickening force in the conscience. Here is the deeper source and the sufficient source of a true moral agency, with a capacity for the motives of duty. The prevalent habits of evil are no necessary result of an impotence of the moral nature. Nor are they consequent simply to a non-use of its powers, but mostly from a persistent resistance to the spontaneous apprehensions of the moral reason and the impulsions of conscience, especially as enlightened and quickened by the divine Spirit. These facts render it the more manifest that through the proper and obligatory use of the powers of our moral agency we can realize the paramount eligibility of the good and choose it against the evil.

This primary choice of the good is not the realization of a new spiritual life in regeneration, but is only, and can only be, the election of its attainment. The choice of such an end and its attainment are clearly separable facts. A new spiritual life in regeneration, if chosen as an end, still has its own mode of effectuation, and in itself must be entirely from the divine Spirit. The sphere of *synergism* lies back of this, where, through the help of grace and a proper use of the powers of our spiritual agency, we may choose the good; while that of the divine *monergism* is specially in the work of moral regeneration. Here the doctrine of the most rigid monergist is the reality of truth; while synergism within its own sphere is equally a truth.

Whoever, by private entreaty or public address, seeks to persuade others from an evil to a good life, must assume the very law of freedom which we here maintain. In such an endeavor he can allow no plea of indifference or moral insensibility, or the dominance of propensities to the evil, or the want of

NO DOCTRINE  
OF SELF-RE-  
GENERATION.

CHOICE AND  
ATTAINMENT.

SYNERGISM.

MONERGISM.

ONLY PRACTI-  
CAL LAW.

actual motives to the choice of the good, to close the case, but must urge any and all such to pause and think, to take into thought and reflection the profound obligations and interests of morality and religion, on the apprehension of which, with the divine help, the paramount motives to the good shall be realized in experience, when the good can be chosen against the evil. Every earnest moral and religious worker does this. The true evangelists of the Christian centuries, and without respect to theological creed, have so entreated and persuaded the thoughtless and vicious. Thus prophets and apostles and the Master himself entreated evil men. So shall we continue to do. But it is all groundless and without possible result, except as the evil have a capacity for moral and religious motives, and a power of personal agency whereby they may place their minds in such relation to the good that it shall be apprehended in the moral reason and in a profound conscious interest as supremely eligible.

5. *True Freedom of Choice.*—This is the doctrine of a rational and a real freedom. It rests upon no false ground, and is constructed with no irrelevant or irreconcilable principles. Every vitally related fact of psychology and personal agency has its proper place and office.

It is not the freedom of arbitrary volition, nor the liberty of indifference. A life without interest in its chosen ends must be utterly forceless and useless. Indeed, it could have no chosen ends. It is the sheerest assumption that either the primary choice of the good or the maintenance of a good life is possible, with indifference to goodness and its blessedness as ends. The theory of a valid and responsible freedom under a law of moral inability is of all theories the most irrational. It requires that the good be chosen, not only without actual motive, but also against the dominance of inevitable counter motive. By so much does it sink below the liberty of indifference or the freedom of mere arbitrary volition. The doctrine here maintained is clear of all these errors. Personal agency is the ground truth. This agency must be a reality, else there can be no place for the question of freedom. If a reality, it must have all requisite faculties. Then freedom should no longer be a question in issue. Its denial involves a denial of personal agency in man. Personal agency and free agency are the same. For required choices sufficient motives are within our command. This is a rational freedom.

It is not the freedom of moral impotence, impotence in the very seat of the necessary potency. It is the freedom of personal agency, with power for required choices. It is sufficient for the sphere of



our responsible life. Spontaneous impulses often tend toward the irrational and the evil, and the more strongly in many instances from previous vicious indulgence; but as rational and moral agents we have a gracious power against them. We can summon into thought and reflection, and into the apprehension of conscience and the moral reason, all the counter motives of obligation and spiritual well-being as they may arise in the view of God and redemption and the eternal destinies. With these resources of paramount motive, and the light and blessing of the Holy Spirit, ever gracious and helpful, we may freely choose the good against the evil. This is the reality of freedom in choice.

Luther : *Bondage of the Will* ; Edwards : *Freedom of the Will* ; Edwards, the younger : *Liberty and Necessity*, Works, vol. i ; Day : *The Will* ; Haven : *Mental Philosophy, The Will* ; Upham : *The Will* ; Hazard : *On the Will ; Causation and Freedom in Willing* ; Calderwood : *Moral Philosophy*, part iii ; Fleming : *Moral Philosophy*, book iii ; Smith, Henry B. : *Faith and Philosophy*, X ; Bockshammer : *Freedom of the Will* ; Bledsoe : *On the Will ; Theodicy*, part i ; Whedon : *Freedom of the Will* ; Mahan : *On the Will* ; Blakey : *Free Will* ; Tappan : *Doctrine of the Will ; Moral Agency*.

## CHAPTER V.

## JUSTIFICATION.

**JUSTIFICATION** by faith is a vital part of Christian soteriology. This is the meaning of its prominence in the Scriptures, particularly in some of the epistles of St. Paul. As he maintains a universal sinfulness, and an atonement in Christ as the necessary ground of salvation, so does he set forth and maintain a justification by faith as the only mode of an actual salvation. This doctrine has always had prominence in the effectual preaching of the Gospel. It was the central truth in the Lutheran reformation. Luther himself, even with the clearest conviction of the many errors of Romanism, still groped in the dark until his mind grasped this great truth. As he found therein his own salvation, so through the power of the same truth the reformation which he led became effectual in the salvation of many. So was it in the great Wesleyan evangelism. Again the doctrine of justification by faith was the central truth in a preaching marvelously effective in salvation. As it has been, so must it be. If in the future the preaching of the Gospel shall be effectual in the salvation of men, so must it be the preaching of justification by faith in Christ.

PROMINENCE  
OF THE DOC-  
TRINE.

On the truth of the facts just stated a clear and truthful view of the doctrine of justification must be profoundly important. Only in an evangelical system can there be a true doctrine. As systems depart from an evangelical basis, so must this doctrine be obscured or perverted, while in the extreme departures it must be entirely lost. Evangelical systems may differ respecting some facts, while each holds the vital truth of the doctrine. Between the Arminian and Calvinistic systems there are differences on this question, which arise mainly from a difference of views respecting the nature of the atonement; but both systems hold the atonement as the true and only ground of justification, and faith in Christ as the one condition of its attainment; and in these facts both hold the vital truth of the doctrine.

IMPORTANCE  
OF A TRUE  
DOCTRINE.

In the discussion of justification it will be proper to consider its nature, ground, and condition. The treatment of these three questions is necessary to the clearer view of the doctrine.

## I. THE NATURE OF JUSTIFICATION.

While it is proper to treat the nature of justification separately from its ground, yet the two are so closely related that the former can receive its full exposition only in connection with the latter. Particularly is it true that the points of difference between the Arminian and Calvinistic views cannot otherwise be clearly set forth. The impossibility arises from the fact that in each system the view of justification is determined by the view of the atonement as its ground.

RELATION OF  
NATURE AND  
GROUND.

1. *Terminology of the Subject.*—The nature of justification must be studied in view of the terms wherein it is expressed, or which are used in such relation to it as to concern its proper interpretation. There are terms which relate to God as justifier, and to his act of justification; and terms which relate to the subjects justified, to the condition of the justification, and to the righteousness which is the result of the divine act of justification. However, the fuller exposition of these terms belongs properly to the more direct treatment of the nature of justification; so that we here need no formal statement of their meaning. It is mainly their use in relation to justification that we think it needful here to point out.

One term is *δικαιος*, which, in application to God, means his justice or righteousness, particularly in the justification of sinners on the ground of atonement.<sup>1</sup> Another term is *δικαιόω*, which means the divine act in the justification of sinners who believe in Christ.<sup>2</sup> Another term, and one in very frequent use, is *δικαιοσύνη*, which, as applied to this subject, specially means the righteousness which God confers by the act of justification.<sup>3</sup> Another term is *λογίζομαι*, which is used in the sense of counting, reckoning, or imputing faith for righteousness, and righteousness without works.<sup>4</sup> If other terms are needed they will appear in the discussion.

DIFFERENT  
TERMS.

2. *Forensic View of Justification.*—Justification is a court term, and in its purely forensic sense means a judgment of innocence or righteousness. If so applied to God's act of justification it must mean simply his judgment of the legal status of the justified, and not his act which determines that status; that is, that God's act of justification is rather his judicial utterance that the person justified is right with the law than a gracious act of forgiveness which sets him right with the law. Underlying this view is the principle, which is often asserted, that those whom the divine judgment declares righteous must be righteous in

JUDICIAL  
SENSE.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. iii, 30; iv, 5; Gal. iii, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. iii, 21, 22; iv, 3, 5, 6; Phil. iii, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. iv, 3-6.

fact. The principle is valid in itself, and would be necessary to the place here assigned it if justification were of the nature UNDERLYING PRINCIPLE. here maintained. But as it is not such, the necessity for that principle is only theoretical, not real. Such a view of justification must assume a prior divine act of forgiveness, which constitutes no part of the justification itself. Further, it must assume a prior imputation of the righteousness of Christ, for only thus could sinners be viewed as even theoretically qualified for a strictly forensic justification. It is in this manner that Calvinism provides for such a justification.

Justification, particularly in that form of it with which we are NOT STRICTLY FORENSIC. now concerned, cannot be strictly forensic. The possibility is excluded by the very nature of such a justification. A person is arraigned and tried for some offense or crime against the law, but in the process of the trial proves his innocence. The court so decides, and formally pronounces him right with the law: this is a forensic justification. But the subjects of the divine justification are sinners. This fact is so explicitly scriptural that it cannot be questioned. Such they are in the divine judgment and condemnation; and as such they cannot be the subjects of a forensic justification.

The theory really requires a twofold justification: one in the A TWOFOLD JUSTIFICATION. literal sense of making righteous; the other in the judicial sense of declaring righteous. An imputation of the righteousness of Christ which makes righteous must be a distinct fact from the forensic justification, and must precede it as its necessary ground. The true doctrine of justification is not to be found in this complex view.

3. *The Vital Fact of Forgiveness.*—Forgiveness really has no place in a strictly forensic justification. It cannot have any, since such a justification is simply an authoritative judgment of actual righteousness. Hence forgiveness and forensic justification can neither be the same thing nor constituent parts of the same thing. There must be error in any theory which omits forgiveness as the vital fact of justification.

That justification means forgiveness is manifest in the fact that THE TRUTH OF FORGIVENESS. sinners or the ungodly are justified. This is clearly the doctrine of St. Paul: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."<sup>1</sup> The words of David,<sup>2</sup> as St. Paul fits

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 23, 24; iv, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. xxxii, 1, 2.

them into his own doctrine, can have no proper interpretation without the fact of forgiveness in justification.<sup>1</sup>

The interchanging use of justification and forgiveness gives to the former the meaning of the latter. Such use is too ONE MEANING clear and sure to admit of any doubt. “Be it known OF TWO TERMS. unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins : and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”<sup>2</sup> In this text the word justified is in meaning the very same as that of forgiveness, which it follows in the same sentence.

“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of A CONCLUSIVE sins that are past, through the forbearance of God ; to TEXT. declare, I say, at this time his righteousness : that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”<sup>3</sup> First of all, the propitiation in the blood of Christ has respect to both the reality and the remission of sins. Next, it is related to God as the ground of his righteousness in such remission. The declaration of his righteousness thereon is twice made in the same sentence. But when, in the second instance, it is followed by the terms of justification instead of the term remission, as in the first, the justification must be the same as the remission. There is the same propitiation, the same declaration of the divine righteousness, the same condition of faith in Christ, in connection with the one term as with the other. There is no new form of thought in the transition from the one to the other.

4. *The Use of Forensic Terms.*—We have already given the meaning of a strictly forensic justification, and shown that such could not be the divine justification of a sinner. There can be no strictly forensic justification of a sinner except by a mistaken or a corrupt judgment, neither of which is possible with God. Yet this forensic term is appropriated for the expression of his act in the forgiveness of sin. Of course it is so used in a qualified sense, and yet not in a sense which is alien to its primary meaning.

There is one fact of the divine forgiveness which is closely kindred to a forensic justification : the result of forgiveness RESULT OF FOR- is a justified state. With respect to the guilt of all GIVENES. past sins, the forgiveness sets the sinner right with the law and with God. That is, by the divine act of forgiveness he is made as completely free from guilt and condemnation, or from amenability to punishment for past sins, as he could be by the most formal

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iv, 6-8.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xiii, 38, 39.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. iii, 25, 26.

judgment of innocence. With this result of forgiveness it may properly be called a justification.

The justification of a sinner is an act of God in the exercise of his rightful sovereignty. It is not, however, the act of an arbitrary sovereignty, as we shall directly point out, but an act of God as supreme moral ruler. Calvinism must insist that justification is definitely and only a judicial act of God. This accords with the view of justification as strictly forensic. But as that view is not the correct one, as we have shown, there is no reason for the position that the act of God in justification or the forgiveness of sin is purely a judicial one. It suffices that it is the act of God as moral ruler. As such it is complete in its authority, and from it there is no appeal: "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?"<sup>1</sup> It is as moral ruler, and in possession of the supreme powers of moral government, that he condemns us for our sins; and so in the exercise of the same powers he forgives our sins. In the result we are, as before pointed out, as completely right with the law as we could be from a purely forensic justification. So far the idea of such a justification is present in the divine remission of sins.

Finally, God forgives sin, not in the exercise of an absolute sovereignty, but only on the ground of the atonement, which renders the forgiveness consistent with his justice and the interests of his moral government. Thus through the propitiation in the blood of Christ, God is righteous in the remission of sin; at once just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.<sup>2</sup> These facts warrant the use of justification for the expression of the divine forgiveness.

5. *A Change of Legal Status.*—Justification effects no change in the interior moral state. All change therein is definitely the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration or sanctification. It is not in the nature of justification that it should effect any such change. It has respect to man simply as a sinner and amenable to punishment, and its whole work is to free him from such amenability. It is in this case just as in that of the pardon of a criminal by the governor of a State, which effects no purification of his inner nature. If in some texts justification seems to mean more than we here ascribe to it, in such texts it must be used in a sense broader than its own proper meaning.

The justification is complete in its own proper work. It cannot annihilate the deeds of sin out of which guilt arises. They are eternal and unchangeable realities, and must forever be the deeds of

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii, 33, 34.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. iii, 24-26.

their authors. Forgiveness abates nothing of their intrinsic demerit, but is a complete discharge from their guilt as an amenability to punishment. In such a sense of guilt, and with respect to all past sins, the forgiveness is complete. So far justification sets the sinner right with God; as completely right as if he had never sinned. It is not a small blessing. With all the limitations that we pointed out it is still a great blessing, great in itself and great in the privileges to which it opens the way.

## II. THE GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION.

We previously stated the very close connection between the nature and the ground of justification, and that it was only in the treatment of the latter that we could attain the clearer view of the former. We are not here concerned with minor differences respecting this ground, but may properly consider it as held in some of the leading systems of theology.

1. *In Socinianism.*—We here use the term Socinianism as representative of all schools which are Pelagian in anthropology and Socinian in Christology and soteriology. However, in these schools there are all shades of opinion, even down to the line of an open infidelity.

Socinus himself held to a form of justification, and made large account of faith in Christ as concerned therein; not, however, as the condition of forgiveness, but as an act of the highest form of obedience, and therefore as a fact of personal righteousness. It means a justification simply by works. It hardly need be observed that the view is in the widest dissent from the Pauline doctrine. In such a view Christ is not in any proper sense the ground of forgiveness, nor faith its condition. There is no justification in forgiveness; but a sinner is justified as he comes to render a righteous obedience to the will of God.

In affiliated schools, such as the Unitarian and Universalist, some admit a proper forgiveness of sin, but hold that repentance is its true and sufficient ground. Neither Christ nor faith in Christ has any necessary relation to either the repentance or the forgiveness. Others deny the possibility of forgiveness. All sin must suffer its deserved penalty, either in this life or in the next. Still others deny all proper demerit of sin, and hence deny all forgiveness. Sin and suffering are related purely as cause and effect, and the suffering as naturally consequent to sin is inevitable. These views utterly exclude every element of a true doctrine of justification.

2. *In Romanism.*—Romanism holds strongly the doctrine of vica-

rious atonement. The sacrifice of Christ is the satisfaction of justice for human sin. This satisfaction is the ground of forgiveness. Yet there is a limitation with respect to both the satisfaction and the forgiveness which perverts the doctrine of justification and departs from its only true and sufficient ground. The sacrifice of Christ made satisfaction for sin as it respects the desert of eternal punishment, and forgiveness entirely frees us from amenability thereto; but there are certain deserts of temporal punishment for which satisfaction is not made, and which therefore are not canceled in forgiveness. Such punishments must be suffered either in this life or in purgatory. The only possible release is through voluntary penance or the surplus merits of the saints. Here is serious error as it respects both the ground and condition of justification.<sup>1</sup>

There are other serious errors. Sanctification is included in justification; or, rather, we are justified only as we are sanctified. The sanctification is by a divine infusion of grace. The specific office of faith as the one condition of justification is really denied. We are justified by faith only as faith itself becomes the source of a new spiritual life.<sup>2</sup>

3. *In Calvinism.*—In this system the atonement in Christ is in the deepest sense the ground of justification, but in a mode peculiar to itself. Justification is held to be strictly forensic, as previously shown. It thus means simply a divine judgment or declaration of righteousness. But those whom God declares righteous must be righteous in fact. Therefore, as all are sinners, there must be a justification in the sense of making righteous prior to such forensic justification. Hence, to provide for the prior justification, Christ must so take the place of sinners as to suffer the punishment due to their sins and fulfill the righteousness required of them, and the substitution in both instances must be accounted to them by imputation. It is in this sense and in this mode that the atonement is held to be the ground of justification.<sup>3</sup>

There is here an exact accordance between the nature of the justification maintained and the alleged ground of it; but there is error respecting both. The atonement is not of the nature here assumed, as we have shown in the treatment of that subject. Therefore there must be error in

<sup>1</sup> *Council of Trent*, 14th session, Canons 12-15; Elliott: *Romanism*, vol. i, book ii, chap. xi.

<sup>2</sup> Moehler: *Symbolism*, pp. 201-207.

<sup>3</sup> *Westminster Confession*, chap. xi; *Larger Catechism*, Q. 70; Buchanan: *Doctrine of Justification*, pp. 116-118; A. A. Hodge: *The Atonement*, pp. 224-227.



the justification here maintained—must be, because it requires that mistaken view of the substitution of Christ. The doctrine is right in finding in the atonement the only ground of justification, but mistakes its nature, and therefore mistakes the true nature of justification itself.

The question of imputed righteousness in justification requires further treatment. Christ is assumed to be the substitute of elect sinners in two respects: in the one as suffering the punishment which they deserve; in the other as fulfilling the personal righteousness due from them.

QUESTION OF  
IMPUTED  
RIGHTEOUS-  
NESS.

The former question was sufficiently discussed in our treatment of the atonement, but the latter is still on hand.

If Christ was really the substitute of elect sinners in personal righteousness, then the same might be imputed to them as the ground of their justification; but such a substitution is an assumption of theology, not a truth of the Scriptures. Or, if justification were strictly forensic, it might be assumed to imply the substitution of Christ and the imputation of his righteousness as its necessary ground; but as it is not such, but is in fact the forgiveness of sin, as we have clearly shown, it neither requires nor implies such a substitution, but is conclusive against it.

NO SUCH A  
SUBSTITUTION.

The Scriptures deeply emphasize the personal righteousness or sinlessness of Christ, but specially and definitely as the requirement of his priestly offices.<sup>1</sup> The texts here given by reference most fully justify our position; and they are the leading texts which directly concern this question. Their explicit sense is that the personal righteousness of Christ goes into his saving work, not as a vicarious and imputable righteousness, but as an element of value in his atoning death and intercession.

PLACE OF THE  
RIGHTEOUS-  
NESS OF  
CHRIST.

The texts usually adduced in proof of an imputation of the personal righteousness of Christ are inconclusive, and may be satisfactorily interpreted without it. “In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.”<sup>2</sup> But as this strength is not an imputation of the divine strength, there is no need to interpret the righteousness as such an imputation.

PROOF TEXTS.

Besides, both the marginal reading and the New Version exclude the possibility of such an interpretation. “And this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”<sup>3</sup> That our Lord should be so called means that he is our righteousness. But how? Surely not literally such.

ISAIAH.

JEREMIAH.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v, 21; Heb. iv, 14-16; vii, 26, 27; ix, 14; 1 Pet. iii, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xlv, 24.

<sup>3</sup> Jer. xxiii, 6.

How then? Clearly, by some agency whereby we are brought into a state of righteousness. We are brought into such a state through the forgiveness of our sins, and the purification of our nature, with the resulting new spiritual life—all being the fruit of our Lord's redemptive mediation. This view is thoroughly scriptural, and fully answers for the meaning of this text, without the unexpressed, and indeed unimplied, imputation of his personal righteousness.

“For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”<sup>1</sup>

PAUL. This is a text of special reliance. The relations of the race respectively to Adam and Christ are here the great subject. In the one the race fell; by the other it is redeemed. The fall was through the disobedience of Adam. St. Paul having so expressed this fact, it was very natural, and almost of course, that he should ascribe our redemption to the obedience of Christ. But we must include therein his passive obedience, because we cannot be justified without his blood. Therefore only such a form of obedience may be meant. Such a meaning simply places this text in complete harmony with others wherein our redemption through the suffering and death of Christ is expressed as the work of his obedience.<sup>2</sup> We certainly do not need for its interpretation the idea of an immediate imputation of his personal righteousness; therefore it does not prove such an imputation. There is another decisive fact: we were not made sinners by the imputation of Adam's sin, in the sense of this doctrine—as was shown in our anthropology; therefore we are not made righteous by an immediate imputation of the personal righteousness of Christ.

“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:”<sup>3</sup> wisdom, as he is the manifestation of the wisdom of God, specially in the plan of human salvation; sanctification, in the purification of our nature through his grace; redemption, as he redeems us with his own blood and accomplishes the work of our salvation. There is no place for imputation in any of these instances. Nor is any needed in the instance of righteousness. As through faith in the blood of Christ we are justified in the remission of sin, so is he made righteousness unto us. There is here no proof of the imputation of his personal righteousness. “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”<sup>4</sup> To be made the righteousness of God in Christ

CHRIST MADE  
RIGHTEOUS-  
NESS UNTO US.  
MADE TO BE  
SIN FOR US.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v, 19.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi, 39, 42; John x, 17, 18; Phil. ii, 8; Heb. x, 5-10.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. i, 30.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v, 21.

must mean to be made partakers of the righteousness provided in him. How is this righteousness provided? The answer is obvious: By his sacrificial death. This is the meaning of his being made sin for us; that is, a sin-offering. The word rendered sin—*ἁμαρτία*—cannot here mean anything else. Thus the whole ground of this righteousness lies in the sacrificial death of Christ. Hence his personal righteousness is not only omitted from this ground, but is really excluded. It is only from a mental habit of always seeing in Christian righteousness the imputed righteousness of Christ, that any one could think of finding the proof of such a doctrine in this text. Indeed, it proves the contrary.

There is one fact which is in itself conclusive against this doctrine of imputation. It is the fact that the salvation in Christ, both as a present attainment and a future blessedness, has its complete ground in his vicarious sacrifice. A brief statement of facts will show this. Herein we have reconciliation with God;<sup>1</sup> the forgiveness of sin;<sup>2</sup> justification;<sup>3</sup> righteousness;<sup>4</sup> regeneration and a new spiritual life;<sup>5</sup> adoption and heirship;<sup>6</sup> meetness for heaven and the possession of future blessedness.<sup>7</sup> Thus it is that all the blessings of a complete salvation are grounded in the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. Hence there is no place for the imputation of his personal righteousness, and no need of it. Indeed, it is excluded. It is possible, as we before pointed out, to express the vicarious sacrifice of Christ in the terms of obedience, but we cannot express that form of his personal righteousness which is held to be imputed to us, in the terms of such sacrifice. The fundamental distinction of the two, as maintained in the doctrine of imputation, renders this impossible. The imputation of the personal righteousness of Christ in our justification, and as the ground of our title to a heavenly inheritance, is thus thoroughly disproved.

4. *In Arminianism.*—In Arminianism the atonement is the true and only ground of justification, but in a sense consistent with the system. In this system the vicarious sufferings of Christ were not the actual punishment of sin in the satisfaction of retributive justice, but a provisory substitute for penalty, so that sin might be actually forgiven. This accords with the nature of justification as being such a forgiveness. In this sense the atonement is the real and only ground of justification.

CONCLUSION  
AGAINST THE  
IMPUTATION.

IMPUTATION  
EXCLUDED.

NATURE OF THE  
GROUND.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v, 10; Eph. ii, 13, 16; Col. i, 20-22.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. i, 7; Col. i, 14.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. iii, 24, 25; v, 9.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v, 21.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. ix, 14; 1 John i, 7; Rev. i, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Gal. iv, 4-7.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. vii, 14-17.

This sense agrees with vitally related facts : with the actual guilt of redeemed sinners until actually forgiven in justification ; with such forgiveness as the essential fact of justification ; with the real conditionality of forgiveness or justification. Were the atonement absolute, as it must be if in the mode of penal substitution, there could be neither guilt nor forgiveness in the case of any redeemed by Christ, nor any conditionality of justification. The reality of these facts is conclusive of a merely provisional ground of justification in the atonement. It is none the less real, or necessary, or sufficient because only provisional in its nature.

5. *Justification Purely of Grace.*—This is the doctrine of St. Paul, repeatedly expressed.<sup>1</sup> It is eminently such on our own doctrine of atonement. The pre-eminence which the doctrine of satisfaction here assumes is utterly groundless. This was clearly shown in our discussion of the atonement. According to the doctrine of satisfaction God remits no penalty; and where there is no forgiveness of sin there can be no grace of forgiveness. On the doctrine which we maintain, the atonement fully provides for the forgiveness of sin, but in itself simply abates nothing of our guilt. Our justification or the forgiveness of our sin must therefore be purely an act of grace. The thought of this grace is intensified in view of the fact that the ground of its exercise is a provision of the infinite love of God.

### III. THE CONDITION OF JUSTIFICATION.

1. *Faith the One Condition.*—By the condition of justification we mean the personal action required for its attainment. That requirement is faith, and faith only. But this faith is specific as it respects both its object and nature, and these facts must be set forth in order to complete the idea of faith itself as the condition of justification.

The Scriptures leave us no reason to doubt that faith is the real and only condition of justification. This is so openly true that a mere reference to a few texts will here suffice.<sup>2</sup> The same truth is emphasized in many texts which discriminate faith from works, and affirm that we are justified by faith and not by works, or by faith without works.<sup>3</sup> This fact makes doubly sure the sense of Scripture, that faith is the one condition of justification.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 24 ; iv, 16 ; Titus iii, 5-7.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. iii, 21-26 ; iv, 3, 23-25 ; Gal. iii, 24.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xiii, 38, 39 ; Rom. iii, 20-22, 28 ; iv, 2-5 ; ix, 31, 32 ; Gal. ii, 16.

It is utterly groundless to say that it is only the works of the ceremonial law that are excluded from all part in the justification of sinners. Works of the moral law are equally excluded. This is manifest in the great argument of St. Paul through which he reaches the impossibility of justification by works. The impossibility lies in the universality of sin: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."<sup>1</sup> The deeds of sin with which he deals are specially violations of the moral law, either as manifest in the light of nature or as given by revelation. There is this further decisive fact: The impossibility of justification by deeds of law is affirmed of the Gentile whose only law is the moral law. In this case there could be no reference to the ceremonial law. Hence there is the same condition of justification for the Gentile as for the Jew.<sup>2</sup>

2. *The Imputation of Faith for Righteousness.*—With the word impute we have also the words count and reckon. Faith is imputed for righteousness, counted for righteousness, reckoned for righteousness.<sup>3</sup> There is no difference of meaning in these words, as here used, that requires any notice. They are all the rendering of the same word, *λογίζομαι*.

Two facts should be specially noted. One is, that it is faith itself, and not its object, that is thus imputed. This is certain even where a pronoun is the immediate antecedent to the verb. Here is an instance: "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."<sup>4</sup> Here only the faith of Abraham can be the antecedent to the pronoun it; and hence only his faith could be the subject of the imputation. Further, faith itself, as so named, is repeatedly the immediate nominative to the imputation. Here are instances: "His faith is counted for righteousness;" "faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness."<sup>5</sup> Hence any attempt at a metonymical interpretation of faith, so that it shall mean, not itself but its object, that is Christ, and hence mean the imputation of his personal righteousness, is utterly vain. The other fact is, that the faith is counted, reckoned, imputed to him whose personal act it is. This is what is imputed to Abraham, to the Jew, to the Gentile. In neither case is there the slightest intimation of an imputation of any personal act of another.

For what is faith imputed? For righteousness. This is the only answer, because such is the uniform statement of the Scriptures. But what is the meaning of righteousness,

ALL WORKS  
EXCLUDED.

FAITH ITSELF,  
AND NOT ITS  
OBJECT.

ONE'S OWN  
FAITH.

FOR RIGHT-  
EOUSNESS.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 23.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. iii, 29, 30; Gal. iii, 8, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. iv, 3, 5, 9, 22, 24.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. iv, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. iv, 5, 9.

as the term is here used? Only two views are worthy of any consideration: one, that faith itself constitutes a proper and real personal righteousness; the other, that righteousness means the legal state consequent upon the remission of sin on the condition of faith.

Faith itself cannot constitute a true personal righteousness, such as consists in a complete fulfillment of personal duties. Considered as a duty, faith could fulfill only its own obligation, and therefore could not answer for any other duty. It never can constitute the sum of Christian obedience. Such a view would infinitely exalt it even above the high place which the Scriptures assign it in the economy of the Christian life. Besides, the relation of faith to righteousness is entirely overlooked. In the view of St. Paul faith is simply the condition of righteousness, whereas in this view it constitutes the righteousness. Also, it takes us entirely away from the atonement in Christ as the only ground of justification, and from the remission of sin as the vital fact thereof.

The truth of the question lies in the other view, that the righteousness for which faith is imputed means the legal state consequent upon the remission of sin. In an earlier part of this discussion it was shown that justification and remission of sins mean the same thing. We further find that the imputation of righteousness has the same meaning as the other two facts. The proof of this oneness of meaning in the three forms of expression lies in a single passage, wherein are set forth, in one sentence and without any real distinction, the righteousness of God, justification, and remission of sins, as conferred on the same condition of faith in Christ.<sup>1</sup> The imputation of faith for righteousness is thus easily understood. It means simply that faith is accepted as the condition of justification or the remission of sin, whereby the believing sinner is set right with God.

3. *Faith in Christ the Condition.*—The fact here stated has already appeared, but should be more fully presented.

In a general view faith in Christ is the condition of justification.

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, . . . even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.”<sup>2</sup> The righteousness of God, as here presented, means the righteousness which he confers in our justification; and it is conferred on the condition of faith in Christ.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 21-26.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. iii, 21, 22.

<sup>3</sup> For the same truth, see Gal. iii, 21-24; Phil. iii, 8, 9.

In a definite view, faith in the redeeming Christ is the condition of justification. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."<sup>1</sup> This one text may here suffice, as it expresses so formally and fully the truth which we stated. Justification or the remission of sin is through faith in the blood of atonement, or in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. This accords with our whole view of the subject. Christ is a Saviour only through an atonement in his blood. So is he offered in the Gospel as the Saviour of the lost. The assurance of salvation is to all who accept him in faith; but the faith which is unto salvation must accept him as the Saviour through an atonement in his blood.

IS THE RE-  
DEEMING  
CHRIST.

THE WHOLE  
VIEW.

4. *Nature of the Faith.*—As justification is a blessing distinct and definite in kind, so the faith on which it is attained must be specific in its form. We shall the more readily reach its true nature by carefully noting the leading distinctions of faith. Preparatory to this, however, it is important to observe what is common to faith in all its forms.

There can be no faith without something objective to the mind in the form of reality or truth. There must be such reality or truth in the mental apprehension, however that apprehension may be mistaken. All faith that is properly such must have respect to evidence—such evidence as verifies to the mind the reality or truth of what is believed. So far faith is one in kind, whatever the differences of its objects. That which is believed may be purely secular, something in the plane of geography, or history, or science; or it may be some profound truth of religion respecting God or Christianity; but whatever the object, faith in its truth must have a ground in evidence. Such is a law of faith in all its spheres.

ONE COMMON  
ELEMENT OF  
FAITH.

There is another view of faith in which profound distinctions arise from differences in its objective truths. Thus arise the distinctions of faith as intellectual, practical, and fiducial.

DISTINCTIONS.

Many truths have for us no practical concern in any matter of either duty or welfare. Such are many facts of history, of geography, of botany, of zoology, of astronomy; and, because they are such,

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 24-26.

faith in them, however sure, can never rise above an intellectual form. Our faith in such facts or truths never can become practical, because they possess nothing which should influence our conduct; never can become fiducial, because they proffer no relief of any need. Here then is a limitation of faith to a merely intellectual form, which is determined by the character of its objective truths.

There are other truths which deeply concern us in respect to both our duty and our well-being. Faith in such truths may be strongly practical, because they embody weighty reasons or motives of practical concern. In such a characterization of faith as practical, it is surely not meant that it is any less intellectual than that form which we have so characterized. The real distinction is from a difference in the objects of faith, which in the one case limit it to an intellectual form, and in the other lift it into a practical form. There are many illustrations of such a faith in both sacred and secular history. Out of the former we may instance the faith of Noah. God made known to him the coming destruction of the world by the flood; and, further, that by the building of an ark he should save himself and family.<sup>1</sup> Noah believed these divine communications, and the practical results followed: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house."<sup>2</sup> His faith found in the truths which it embraced the sufficient reasons or motives for his work. This instance can hardly fail to suggest others. Indeed, it is this practical element of faith which, more than any thing else, finds its illustration in this remarkable chapter. Such is the practical power of faith. Such motives as may strongly influence conduct lie in the truths believed, and through faith they become practical forces in the life. The very nature of these forces explains the transcendent practical power of Christian faith. This power is so great because the practical motives embodied in the truths of Christianity infinitely transcend all other motives which may influence human conduct.

Then in the objective truth which the faith embraces there may be deeply needed help, and also the most assuring trustworthiness; in which case faith may take the form of confidence or trust. We thus reach what is distinctive of the faith which is unto justification. In the approach to its exercise there is a profound sense of need. There is the sense of sin and peril; and with it the sense of an utter self-help-

<sup>1</sup> Gen. vi, 13-22.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xi, 7.



lessness. In the stress of such an exigency the soul looks to Christ and believingly apprehends in him the salvation which it so much needs. It apprehends, not only the fullness of his grace, but also its freeness; not only that he is mighty to save, but also that he graciously waits to save. Here, then, is the most assuring trustworthiness. The act of trust is still wanting, but the soul is ready for it. Now in the apprehension of Christ in his atonement, and in the fullness and freeness of his grace, the soul trustingly rests in him for the needed salvation, and thereon receives the forgiveness of sin. This is justification by faith. And such is the distinctive character of the faith which is unto justification.

While faith is the one and only condition of justification, yet a true repentance is always presupposed, because only in such a mental state can the proper faith be exercised. An impenitent soul cannot properly trust in Christ for the forgiveness of sin. In such a state there can be no real sense of its need, and therefore no possibility of the act of trust. Nor can it be consistent with either the holiness of God or the requirements of his moral government that he should forgive an impenitent soul. The spirit of impenitence is at once the spirit of self-justification with respect to past sins and the very essence of rebellion against God. The forgiveness of such a soul would be, in effect, a free license to future sinning. Before the gracious act of pardon there must be a true contrition for past sins, a godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation.<sup>1</sup>

Justification by faith is a provision of the divine economy of salvation which admirably meets the pressing need of a sinful race. It is the only provision which can meet such need. There is no real redemption from sin, nor entrance into a true spiritual life, without a prior consciousness of sin. At the very beginning, therefore, the sinner must come to the sense of a sinful and lost condition. What now can meet the exigencies of his case? You may tell him to mend his life for the future; but in the depths of his soul is the sense of an utter helplessness for such amendment, and also the sense of demerit on account of past sins, for which such amendment, even if it were possible, could make no atonement. Nothing that you can advise him to do, nothing that you can offer him, save Christ, can meet his necessity. He is consciously a perishing, helpless sinner, and from the depths of his soul there is a cry for help. Now offer him Christ in his atonement, and an instant forgiveness and salva-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vii, 10.

tion through faith in his grace, and you thoroughly meet his necessities. The fact has been verified by innumerable happy experiences.

It is only very shallow thinking that can object to such an economy as opposed to the interests of morality. The deep sense of sin, the genuine repentance, the spirit of consecration to a good life in the service of God as the prerequisite of forgiveness, the known necessity of a good life in order to the retention of the justified state, the grateful love for the great salvation so graciously provided and conferred—all combine in the enforcement of the highest form of Christian morality. The question of practical results is confidently appealed to the history of the evangelical Churches, wherein great prominence is given to the doctrine of justification by faith. No system of ethics apart from Christianity, nor any unevangelical form of Christianity, lifts up so many into a truly good life.

5. *Harmony of Paul and James.*—On the question of justification they are in seeming opposition. We cite a single text from each: from Paul: “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law;”<sup>1</sup> from James: “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”<sup>2</sup> In each instance the text gives the conclusion of the author after a discussion of the question, and therefore stands as a formal statement of his doctrine. There is a further noticeable fact, that each finds the illustration and proof of his doctrine in the life of Abraham. But this fact, instead of perplexing the question of consistency between them, opens the way to an easy reconciliation.

The complete reconciliation lies in the fact that they are treating distinct forms of justification: Paul, that in the forgiveness of sins; James, that in actual and approved obedience. The former is by faith without works; the latter by works of obedience, which spring from a living faith as their practical source. These statements are fully verified by the references to Abraham. That of Paul is to his faith in the great promise of God respecting the birth of Isaac, which faith was counted to him for righteousness.<sup>3</sup> No doubt the promise of Isaac infolded a promise of the Messiah. This is the instance which Paul adduces as at once an illustration and a proof of his doctrine of justification without works; but a justification in the sense of forgiveness.<sup>4</sup> The reference of

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 28.

<sup>2</sup> James ii, 24.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xv, 3-6.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. iv, 2-5; Gal. iii, 6-8.

James is to the offering up of Isaac.<sup>1</sup> But this event occurred some twenty-five or thirty years after that referred to by Paul, and is so thoroughly different that it well might be adduced for the illustration and proof of a very different kind of justification. James does so adduce it: "Was not Abraham our Father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?"<sup>2</sup> Now between two kinds of justification so thoroughly different there can be no doctrinal contradiction. For every such contradiction there must be opposing affirmations respecting the same thing; but when Paul declares that we are justified by faith, without the deeds of the law, and James, that we are justified by works, and not by faith only, they are not speaking of the same thing, and therefore there cannot be any contradiction between them. Such is the usual mode of reconciling them. The mode is valid, and the reconciliation complete.

However, the interpretation of James often falls short of his true doctrine. Such is the case when the interpretation is that we are justified by works, as works are the evidence of a true and living faith. This must mean that we are justified by faith, while works are allowed no direct part therein. The instance of Abraham is often so interpreted. But more was required of him than faith, and more was rendered, even the offering up of his own son; and this act of obedience was of direct account in his justification, and not simply as an evidence of the genuineness of his faith. Obedience answers to duty as really as faith, and is even more definitely a fact of personal righteousness. The justification of Abraham, as maintained by James, was really forensic in its character; that is, it was God's judicial approval of his personal character. This is the meaning of the Scriptures: "For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."<sup>3</sup> That "thou fearest God" means a personal character which God's judgment approved. He so approved this special instance of Abraham's obedience.<sup>4</sup> The obedience was itself righteous. This is the doctrine of James and the sense of Scripture.

Faber: *The Primitive Doctrine of Justification*; Ritschl: *History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation*; Calvin: *Institutes*, book iii, chaps. xi-xviii; Owen: *The Doctrine of Justification*, Works (Goold's), vol. v; Buchanan: *The Doctrine of Justification*; Alexander: *Faith*, v, vi; Shedd: *Dogmatic Theology, Soteriology*, chap. v; Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, vol. iii, chap. xvii; Moehler: *Symbolism*, book i, part i, chap. iii; Burnet: *The XXXIX*

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxii, 1-12.

<sup>2</sup> James ii, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xxii, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. xxii, 16-18.

*Articles*, Article XI; McIlvaine: *Justification by Faith*; Newman: *The Doctrine of Justification*; Heurtly: *Justification*, Bampton Lectures, 1845; Schmid: *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, § 42; Harkey: *Justification by Faith*; Wardlaw: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 678-727; Wesley: *Sermons*, V, VI, XX; Works, vol. vi, pp. 100-124; Watson: *Theological Institutes*, Part Second, chap. xxiii; Hare: *Scriptural Doctrine of Justification*; Bunting: *Sermons*, vol. ii, pp. 60-84; Davies: *Treatise on Justification*; Curry: *Fragments*, viii, ix; Merrill: *Aspects of Christian Experience*, chaps. iv-vii.

## CHAPTER VI.

## REGENERATION.

WHILE regeneration is closely related to justification, there are real points of difference between them. They differ widely in the grounds of their necessity. The necessity for justification lies in the fact of guilt, while the necessity for regeneration lies in the depravity of our nature. Hence they must fulfill different offices in the work of our salvation. It is the office of justification to cancel our guilt, while it is the office of regeneration to renew or purify our moral nature. Yet in other facts the two are closely related. They are coincident in time. There is no reason for any chronological separation; not even where the consciousness of the moral change wrought by regeneration is a gradual attainment. Further, we are justified and regenerated on the same act of faith. The two great blessings are not separately offered to separate acts of faith; they are offered together as inseparable blessings of the salvation in Christ, and so are received on one and the same act of faith.

Regeneration, like justification, is a vital part of Christian soteriology. It must be such, since native depravity is a reality, and regeneration a necessity to a truly spiritual life. It follows that a truthful doctrine of regeneration must be profoundly important. Yet it is one respecting which error has widely prevailed, and greatly to the detriment of the Christian life. However, as between evangelical systems, the doctrine of regeneration has been far less in issue than that of justification, mostly because it is less directly concerned in the doctrinal view of the atonement.

## I. THE NATURE OF REGENERATION.

1. *In the Light of the Scriptures.*—The nature of regeneration must be studied in the light of the Scriptures. The true doctrine must be found in the meaning of the terms and facts wherein the gracious work is expressed.

The question is not open to a philosophical interpretation, nor to any purely scientific treatment. The reason is, that we cannot in any such mode reach the facts which vitally concern the doctrine. For instance, we cannot thus reach the nature of depravity, in which lies the necessity for regen-

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JUSTIFICATION.VITAL PART OF  
SOTERIOLOGY.NOT OPEN TO  
PHILOSOPHIC  
TREATMENT.

eration. We know that it is a state of our sensuous and moral nature, and we know its characteristic tendency to evil; but just what it is in itself we cannot know. Yet the nature of depravity as a subjective state must largely determine the nature of regeneration. Therefore, as we cannot in any purely scientific or philosophic mode know the nature of depravity itself, neither can we in any such mode discover the inner nature of regeneration.

Some have thought the subject more open to rational treatment on the ground of a trichotomic anthropology than on NO CLEARER IN TRICHOTOMY. the dichotomic. We do not see any clearing of the question in this view. Trichotomy is not an established truth; and so long as it remains uncertain in itself it can render little service in the interpretation of any doctrine. Further, trichotomy effects no change in the real question, so far as it relates to our thinking. No class of sensuous or moral phenomena, as now known, is eliminated or in the least modified; no new class is introduced. Nothing is other than it was for our thinking. Hence the assumption of three distinct natures in man—of a psychic nature intermediate to the physical and mental, and additional to them—cannot clear the way to any direct insight into the nature of depravity as a subjective state. We are just as far short of any such insight as we were on the ground of a dichotomic anthropology.

Not a few have been pleased with Henry Drummond's treatment TREATMENT BY DRUMMOND. of regeneration. This is really the subject, although his own topical word is biogenesis.<sup>1</sup> The treatment is admirable in literary quality, and attractive in scientific cast. The laws of biogenesis on which his doctrine is constructed are thoroughly valid. Life is begotten only of life. Biogenesis holds the ground securely against abiogenesis. There is no life from the lifeless. We see no reason to question other laws set forth: that the source of life must answer for the kind or grade of that which it produces; and that a lower form of life can be lifted up into a higher form only through the power of the higher. On the ground of such principles only a divine source can answer for a truly spiritual life in man. This is the necessity for regeneration. Man must be born from above; must be born of God. However, the treatment is new only in its scientific cast and terminology, and in the application of the laws of biogenesis to the questions of regeneration. That regeneration is necessary to a truly spiritual life, and that it is possible only through the divine agency, are truths long familiar to our evangelical theology, and widely and effectively preached from many pulpits.

<sup>1</sup> *Natural Law in the Spiritual World: Biogenesis.*

But the laws of biogenesis, as here applied, lead into serious error respecting the real necessity for regeneration. According to these laws, as here set forth, that necessity must have been original to the constitution of man; while the real necessity lies in a corruption of human nature consequent to the Adamic fall. There is in Drummond no proper recognition of this ground. Indeed, it could not be made to chime with his doctrine. Nor do his principles require either the atonement in Christ or the special mission and work of the Holy Spirit for which it provides. It is true that in his treatment there is frequent recognition of both Christ and the Holy Spirit as the source of the new spiritual life, but this fact cannot affect the truth of our position; for nothing in the original constitution of man could require the grace of a redemptive economy for its relief. If in his original constitution man was placed in the plane of a purely natural life, then, according to the laws of biogenesis, he would need a spiritual endowment which only divinity itself could confer, in order to a truly spiritual life; but he could not need the grace of a redemptive economy as the provisional ground of such endowment. These inevitable implications mean some serious error in the doctrine of Drummond. Regeneration, whether in respect to its nature or necessity, cannot be explained on the ground of "natural law in the spiritual world."

2. *Representative Terms.*—There is a class of Scripture terms in which regeneration, or the gracious work which it represents, is expressed as a new birth. We may instance the following: born again;<sup>1</sup> born of God;<sup>2</sup> born of the Spirit.<sup>3</sup> These several forms of expression have the same meaning respecting the nature of regeneration. When we reach the deeper principle of their interpretation we shall find that meaning very clear and full. There are other forms of expression which contain the same truth respecting regeneration, but we get their full meaning only as we read them in the light of the truly representative terms. With such limitation, they still render valuable service in setting forth the true nature of regeneration. However, the terms which set forth this great moral change in the light of a new birth are properly designated the representative terms. They are the ground of the specific term regeneration—*παλιγγενεσία*—the one in common theological use for the expression of the doctrine.

3. *Analogical Interpretation.*—In these forms of expression there

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 3, 7; 1 Pet. i, 23.

<sup>2</sup> John i, 13; 1 John iii, 9; iv, 7; v, 1.

<sup>3</sup> John iii, 5, 8.

is a comparison of spiritual regeneration with natural generation or birth. The comparison implies some analogy between the things thus compared. Accordingly, some attempt an interpretation of regeneration on the ground of such analogy. It is easy to institute points of comparison; but if we stop short of a really interpreting principle, little light is gained for the real question. Under these figurative expressions, or in natural generation and birth, we may find the inception of a new life, a new life in the mode of derivation, and a transition into a new mode of life. These are facts of natural generation and birth; and it is easy to find corresponding facts in regeneration. It surely means the inception of a new life, and a new life by derivation or communication, and a new mode of life.

In this manner regeneration is interpreted, but the interpretation is superficial, and fails to give us any clear insight into its real nature. The failure arises from the fact that these points of comparison mean nothing in themselves for the nature of the new life received in regeneration. They are too broadly applicable for any such definite meaning. The same facts are true of all orders of propagated life; just as true of the lion as of the lamb; just as true in the animal plane as in the human. These points of analogy lead us up to the one fact which is full of meaning for the nature of regeneration, but fall short of it, and therefore fail to give us any clear insight into that nature.

4. *Deeper Principle of Interpretation.*—Underlying the points of comparison usually presented in the analogical treatment, there is a deeper fact which gives us the true nature of regeneration. It is the fact that the offspring is in the likeness of the parentage. This principle rules in all the forms of propagated life. It is the determining law of species. It here suffices that we merely state this law, as it was sufficiently discussed in our anthropology. We there found it a valid and sufficient ground for the genetic transmission of depravity from Adam down through the race. This is the principle which opens the clearer view of regeneration. As by natural generation we inherit from the progenitors of the race a corruption of the moral nature, so by the new birth we receive the impress and likeness of the Holy Spirit.

This is our interpreting principle. Nor is it fetched from afar, but is right at hand in the classical passage on regeneration: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."<sup>1</sup> In the first part the truth is deeper than the derivation of a body

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 6.



of flesh in the form and likeness of the parental body ; it means the inheritance of a corrupt nature. This was shown in our anthropology. In this corruption of nature lies the necessity for the new birth. It was on the ground of this fact that Christ said to Nicodemus: "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." But such a necessity can be met only by a divine operation within the moral nature which shall purify it and transform it into the moral likeness of the divine. All this is in the meaning of the words of Christ: "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit"—spirit, not essentially, but in the sense of a spiritual or holy quality. As the depravity of the original parentage is transmitted through natural generation, so through regeneration we are transformed into the moral likeness of the Holy Spirit. This meets the necessity for regeneration. There is no other way in which it can be met. Thus we find the real meaning of being born of the Spirit.

The nature of the regenerate state is thus manifest. It is a state of subjective holiness. We state the characteristic or predominant fact, without reference to the proper distinction between regeneration and entire sanctification. It must be a state of subjective holiness because it is the result of an operation of the Holy Spirit which as really transforms the soul into the moral likeness of himself as the laws of nature determine the likeness of the offspring to its parentage.

There is no mystery in this doctrine which should in the least discredit it with any who believe in God. Just what it is in the inner nature of a mineral, a plant, or an animal which determines its peculiar cast, we do not know ; but God knows, and it was easy for him to so determine the nature in each. So did he make man, even in his own image ; and, after he has fallen into a corrupt state, he can renew him in holiness after his own image. If this is not possible, no agency of God is possible in either creation or providence.

5. *Other Forms of Presentation.*—Regeneration, or that moral renovation which it represents, is expressed in other forms of thought, but the deeper idea of a moral transformation into the likeness of the divine holiness is ever present. A few instances will answer for illustration ; and we shall thus bring other texts into service in setting forth the nature of regeneration.

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean : from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you : and I will take away the

THE REGEN-  
ERATE STATE.

NO DISCREDIT-  
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CLEANSING.

stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."<sup>1</sup> Here is a state of moral corruption and of insensibility to spiritual things. The filthiness and the heart of stone can mean nothing less. Such is the subject of the moral renovation. The renovation is a purification, and the inception of a new spiritual life. Such is the meaning of the sprinkling with clean water, the cleansing, and the new heart and new spirit. Such is the work of regeneration.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."<sup>2</sup> To be in Christ, as here expressed, is to be in living union with him. This is the state of an actual salvation, and the same as the regenerate state. To be thus in Christ is to be a new creature, or a new creation. By such a new creation we are transformed into a state of holiness like unto the primitive holiness wherein man was made in the likeness of God. This is the same deep sense of regeneration.

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."<sup>3</sup> The old man is both a corrupt nature and a vicious habit of life. The new man is the opposite in both respects. This is plain from the contrast in which they are placed. It is manifest in the fact that the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. The old man and the new are such that the former can be put off and the latter put on only through a renewal in the spirit of our mind. This must be a thorough moral transformation. It is such in fact, for it is being created anew in the image of God. This is the same deep truth of regeneration which we found in its representative terms. St. Paul expresses the same truth elsewhere, and in very similar words: "Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."<sup>4</sup>

6. *The New Life*.—Regeneration is the ground of a new spiritual life, a life in righteousness. In the very nature of it, as set forth in the Scriptures, it must be such.

Is it expressed as a new birth or a being born of God? "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." "Beloved, let us love one another"

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xxxvi, 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. v, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. iv, 22-24.

<sup>4</sup> Col. iii, 9, 10.

other : for love is of God ; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." " For whatsoever is born of God LIFE AFTER THE SPIRIT. overcometh the world."<sup>1</sup> Or is regeneration a being born of the Spirit ? " For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. . . . That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."<sup>2</sup> " But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance : against such there is no law."<sup>3</sup> Such are the fruits of regeneration ; for the Holy Spirit plants his graces, not in the vicious soil of the flesh, but only in the soul which by regeneration is morally transformed into the likeness of himself.

As regeneration is a new creation whereby we become new creatures in Christ, so old things pass away, and all things become new ; a good life replaces the evil life.<sup>4</sup> " For A GOOD LIFE. we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."<sup>5</sup> In regeneration the old man is put off, and not only as a corrupt nature, but also as an evil life ; and the new man is put on, not only by the purification of the moral nature, but also in the habit of a new life in righteousness and true holiness.<sup>6</sup> Further, regeneration is expressed as at once a crucifixion and a resur- ALIVE WITH CHRIST. rection with Christ ; and on these grounds a new spiritual life, a truly Christian life, is set forth as both a privilege and a duty.<sup>7</sup> By such crucifixion we die to sin ; and by such a resurrection we are made alive in Christ. Such is the deep meaning of Paul when he says : " I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."<sup>8</sup> Only a truly spiritual or Christian life can properly answer to the life in Christ attained in regeneration.

## II. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

1. *Testimony of the Scriptures.*—That regeneration is attributed to the persons of the Trinity severally is entirely consistent with its being specially the work of the Holy Spirit. It is in this case as in the works of creation and providence. These are specially the work of the Father, and yet the Son and the Spirit are represented as co-operative in both. The consistency of such representation lies in the unity of the three in the divine Trinity. The case is the same respecting regeneration.

<sup>1</sup> 1 John ii, 29 ; iii, 9 ; iv, 7 ; v, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii, 2-4.      <sup>3</sup> Gal. v, 22, 23.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v, 17.      <sup>5</sup> Eph. ii, 10.

<sup>6</sup> Eph. iv, 22-24 ; Col. iii, 9, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Rom. vi, 3-14.      <sup>8</sup> Gal. ii, 20.

The classical text in which we found the clearest light on the nature of regeneration is in itself quite decisive of the fact that it is specially the work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> The same truth appears in the fact that we are saved "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."<sup>2</sup> Baptism, here expressed as the washing of regeneration, is the sign of an inward purification which is efficaciously wrought by the Holy Spirit. There are other texts which set forth the same truth, though in the use of another word—sanctification—in place of regeneration.<sup>3</sup> This special work of the Spirit is in full accord with the pervasive sense of Scripture respecting his agency in the economies of religion.

2. *Immediate Agency of the Spirit.*—Such an agency of the Holy Spirit should be emphasized because it is vital to the reality of regeneration itself. There is no other mode of his operation whereby the soul can be transformed into the moral likeness of himself. In the miracles of our Lord the leper was not cleansed nor the dead quickened into life by the use of intermediate agencies: the divine power acted immediately upon the subject of the miracle, and so was efficacious in its work.<sup>4</sup> Only in this mode can the Holy Spirit be efficacious in the regeneration of the soul.

3. *The Only Efficient Agency.*—Whatever may be conditional to regeneration, or whatever must precede or accompany it, still it is efficaciously wrought solely by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The error of baptismal regeneration has widely prevailed. It is thoroughly the doctrine of Romanism; predominantly, of Lutheranism and Anglicanism. But the effect is impossible to such a cause. No man can rationally think it possible that the outward application of water to the body should effect the interior renovation of the soul. Baptism is the sign of an interior purification by the power of the Holy Spirit, but can have no part in the efficacious agency whereby it is wrought. It is true that the Scriptures verbally place baptism close to regeneration.<sup>5</sup> In like manner they place baptism equally close to justification or the remission of sins.<sup>6</sup> But is it possible in fact, or can any one rationally think it possible, that the application of water in baptism should cancel the guilt of sin? Justification or the forgiveness of sins is definitely and only the act of God; and baptism can have no part

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 5–8.

<sup>2</sup> Tit, iii, 5.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 13; 1 Pet. i, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. viii, 2, 3; John xi, 41–44.

<sup>5</sup> John iii, 5; Acts ii, 38; Eph. v, 26; Tit. iii, 5; Heb. x, 22.

<sup>6</sup> Acts ii, 38; xxii, 16.

in it, except as a sign or confession of the faith whereon the gracious forgiveness is granted. Baptism is equally without efficacy in itself for our spiritual regeneration.

Some hold that we are regenerated by the power of the truth. Such is the common rationalistic view. It is definitely the doctrine of the Disciples, or Campbellites. Some in the fellowship of thoroughly orthodox Churches hold the same view.<sup>1</sup> The fact is not really other because the Scriptures are designated as an instrumental agency, nor because there is also set forth an agency of the Holy Spirit. The real point is that an efficient agency is assigned to the Scriptures in the work of regeneration. In verification of this position we cite a single passage: "The change of heart in regeneration is produced by a previous change of judgment. The erroneous opinions of the sinner are corrected, and that corrects his feelings. He receives new information, and that gives another direction to his affections. Plainly, the Bible removes his delusions, and, in showing him the true nature of objects, makes him love many things which he formerly hated, and hate many things which he formerly loved. When he believes its report; when he takes Bible views of objects, looks at them through its telescope, looks at them through its microscope, looks at them through its atmosphere; when he looks at God, looks at Christ, looks at himself, looks at his soul, looks at this world, looks at death, looks at eternity in Bible light, the look revolutionizes him. See what a commotion has been produced among the affections of his spirit, so soon as this heavenly light, altering the decisions of his judgment, has dawned on his mind! He is now with ardor pursuing objects which he formerly despised, or feared, or abhorred; and fleeing, as when a man flees from the plague, or from his house on fire, from objects which he formerly considered harmless, or in which his soul delighted. The Bible light has disclosed friends where he thought there were none but foes, and foes where he thought there were none but friends."<sup>2</sup> This passage cannot mean any thing less than an efficient agency of divine truth in the regeneration of the soul. And what is true of it is equally true of the fuller discussion.

Those who maintain this doctrine assume to find the proof of it in the Scriptures themselves. Some texts are seemingly in their favor.<sup>3</sup> That divine truth, as revealed in the Scriptures, fulfills important offices in the attainment of salvation and the maintenance of a truly spiritual life, is not to be

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THE CONTRARY  
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THE ALLEGED  
PROOFS.

<sup>1</sup> Anderson : *Regeneration*, sec. iii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 82, 83.

<sup>3</sup> John xv, 3; xvii, 17; James i, 18; 1 Pet. i, 23.

questioned. That it possesses in itself the power of regenerating the soul, must be denied as at once unscriptural and impossible. The texts which seemingly attribute regeneration to the power of the truth cannot be interpreted as actually so meaning without placing them in opposition to the many which definitely ascribe that work to the divine agency, and in a manner to mean that it is the only efficient agency. There is no need of an interpretation which involves such an opposition of texts. The many services of the truth in our attainment of salvation, and in our maintenance of a true Christian life, will, without any notion of its regenerating power, easily interpret the texts adduced in proof of such a power.

It is not in the nature of truth, not even of divine truth, that it should possess the power of regeneration. The Scriptures, which contain this truth, give us a knowledge of divine things; but such knowledge has no direct power over our moral nature. They contain many holy precepts, enough indeed for our guidance into all duty; but precepts have not in themselves the power of ruling our lives; and much less have they the power of sanctifying our nature. Wherein, then, lies the great power of the Scriptures in the religious life? The answer is obvious: It lies in the practical motives embodied in the great religious truths which they reveal. Such motives may act upon our moral and religious feelings, and through them become a ruling force in our religious life. But such is the only mode of their power; consequently, they can never reach the moral nature with any power of regeneration.

We have no power of self-regeneration. The nature of inherited depravity precludes its possibility. As a subjective state it is as really in us and of us as if original to our nature. Hence a power of self-regeneration would be the same as a power of changing one's own nature. There can be no such power. It is the sense of Scripture respecting our natural state that we have no such power.<sup>1</sup> In this moral impotence lies the necessity for the economy of redemption. Regeneration is a true sphere of the divine monergism.

There is also a sphere of synergism. Regeneration is not an absolute work of the Spirit. We have already shown its conditionality. There are prerequisites which cannot be met without our own free agency. There must be an earnest turning of the soul to God, deep repentance for sin, and a true faith in Christ. Such are the requirements of our own agency. There is no regeneration for us without them. Yet they are not

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 6; Rom. vii, 5, 14, 18, 21; viii, 3-8.

possible in the unaided resources of our own nature. Hence there must be a helping work of the Spirit prior to his work of regeneration. There is such help. The Holy Spirit enlightens, awakens, and graciously draws us. All this may be without our consent, and even despite our resistance. We may finally resist, or we may yield to the gracious influences, and be born of the Spirit. Here is the sphere of synergism.

### III. REGENERATION AND SONSHIP.

1. *Regeneration the Ground of Sonship.*—To be born of God is to be born into his family, and to become his child. Sonship is thus immediately from regeneration. This is the clear meaning of the Scriptures. THE PROOFS. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”<sup>1</sup> The same truth is given in another text, though the form of expression is different: “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”<sup>2</sup> There is here the same faith in Christ as the condition of sonship; while the baptism into Christ and the putting on Christ are both the sign and the reality of regeneration, which is the immediate ground of the sonship.

As regeneration is a reality, so is there deep meaning in such a ground of sonship. Adam was the son of God, but only on the ground of creation. We are all his offspring, MEANING FOR SONSHIP. but in a like mode. But the idea of a divine parentage underlies the sonship which has its ground in regeneration. To be born of God is to be placed nearer the divine Fatherhood than is possible to the angels.

2. *Adoption and Sonship.*—Sometimes this sonship is represented as by adoption: “But ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”<sup>3</sup> This text SONSHIP BY ADOPTION. means a gracious sonship, for it is that to which the Holy Spirit is here represented as witnessing. But the very characterization of the Spirit as the Spirit of adoption clearly means a gracious sonship by adoption. We have elsewhere the same view: God sent forth his Son to redeem us, “that we might receive the adoption of sons.”<sup>4</sup>

In civil government sonship by adoption is sonship by provision of law, not on the ground of parentage. In the absence of such

<sup>1</sup> John i, 12, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. iii, 26, 27.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. viii, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. iv, 5.

ground adoption is the only mode of sonship. Now there is a sense in which we are alien from God; out of filial relation to him. Hence, when we are so viewed as the subjects of a gracious affiliation, our sonship may very properly be represented as in the mode of adoption. But it is never really such in fact. The new birth always underlies this sonship.

3. *The Heritage of Blessings.*—As related to the Father's love and the inheritance of his children, sonship by adoption is the very same as sonship by regeneration. They are all heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, and shall be like him.<sup>1</sup> It would be impossible to add any thing to the passages given in the reference that could heighten the view of that inheritance.

Faber: *The Primitive Doctrine of Regeneration*; Anderson: *Regeneration*; Phelps: *The New Birth*; Heard: *The Tripartite Nature of Man*, chap. xii; Delitzsch: *Biblical Psychology*, v, *Regeneration*; Wesley: *Sermons*, xviii, xix; Fletcher: *Discourse on the New Birth*, Works, vol. iv, pp. 97-117; Merrill: *Aspects of Christian Experience*, chap. viii; Pope: *Christian Theology*, vol. iii, pp. 1-27; Raymond: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 344-361; Schmid: *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, § 46; Leighton: *Works, Theological Lectures*, xv, xvi; Shedd: *Dogmatic Theology, Soteriology*, chap. iii; Backus: *Scripture Doctrine of Regeneration*; Sears: *Regeneration—Unitarian view.*

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<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii, 14-18; Gal. iv, 4-7; 1 John iii, 2.



## CHAPTER VII.

## ASSURANCE.

## I. THE DOCTRINE.

1. *Meaning of Assurance.*—We mean by assurance the persuasion or confidence of a believer in Christ that he is a child of God. As the atonement is the ground of the gracious affiliation, so the assurance of its attainment, specially in its Christian form, is the privilege only of believers in Christ.

The matter of assurance is definitely that of sonship. There is a doctrine of assurance which allies itself with that of an absolute election to salvation, and means a certainty of future blessedness. The view is this: The attainment of a gracious state is conclusive of election; and election is conclusive of both final perseverance and future blessedness. We are not here concerned with this view, and, without further notice of it, proceed with our own doctrine. The assurance we maintain respects simply a present state of grace. As before observed, the state is definitely that of sonship. This is specially true as it respects the assurance received from the witness of the Holy Spirit. Here are the evidences: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."<sup>1</sup> These are the classical texts on the witness of the Spirit, and are in themselves entirely sufficient for the present point. Justification and regeneration are so closely related to this sonship that we easily think them included with it in the matter to which the Spirit witnesses; but the Scriptures do not so include them. It is true that we attain an assurance of both, but not by the direct witness of the Spirit, as in the case of sonship. They come to be facts of assurance through the witness of our own spirit—which will hereafter be set forth. By a limitation of assurance through the witness of the Spirit to the definite fact of sonship, as the Scriptures limit it, we shall secure for his witnessing a clearness of interpretation not otherwise attainable.

As a mental state or fact of consciousness, assurance is like faith; yet not so much the definite act of faith as the resulting persuasion

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii, 16; Gal. iv, 6.

of truth in what we have believed. Consciousness readily distinguishes between the definite act of faith and the consequent persuasion of truth in the matter believed. Of course the distinction is the clearer and fuller as the matter involved the more deeply concerns us. If it be something of profound interest for our future, then the abiding confidence in its truth will be as real and clear in our consciousness as was the definite act of faith wherein we first believed it true. The assurance of a gracious sonship is such a form of confidence. There is reason for so characterizing it. So far as derived from the witness of our own spirit, it springs from appropriate testimony, and therefore must partake of the nature of faith. And, while the witness of the Spirit is given in an entirely different mode, yet the assurance which it produces is not different in kind, nor distinct in fact, from the assurance received through the witness of our own spirit.

2. *Truth of Assurance.*—The truth or reality of assurance will receive its clearest and fullest presentation in the treatment of the witness of the Spirit and the witness of our own spirit. Preparatory to that presentation we may notice a few facts which combine in the proof of such a privilege.

As already shown, the matter of assurance is that of a state of salvation which is attained through justification and the new birth. We thus enter into God's favor and become his children and heirs. These privileges are possible through the wonderful provisions of his redeeming love. To this end he sent forth his Son "to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."<sup>1</sup> Such is the actual and only ground of this sonship. And we attain it only through a gracious act of God toward us in the forgiveness of our sins, and a mighty work of God within us whereby we become his children. It is not consistent with any reasonable view of either that it should be hidden from us.

If God freely forgives our sins he will in some way assure us of the fact. If an officer of government should pardon a criminal the fact would surely be made known to him. How then shall God hide from us the forgiveness of our sins? To one and another Christ said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." In every such instance there were two distinct facts: one, the act of pardon—an act purely within the mind of Christ; the other, a making known the act to the subject of the forgiveness. The act of pardon was complete in itself, and would have been none the

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv, 4, 5; 1 John iii, 1.

less complete without the making it known ; but how naturally the latter fact goes with the former ! In view of the character of Christ we could not reasonably think of him as withholding the assurance of forgiveness in any such instance. God is not less merciful in the forgiveness of our sins. Nor are we less in need of the information than were those who went to Christ in their sin and sorrow. And no more reasonably could we think of God as hiding from us his gracious act of forgiveness.

The new birth is a mighty change wrought within us. Such we found it to be in our treatment of regeneration. We are therein born of God, born into the kingdom of God, and so become his children and heirs ; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. The life is new. The love of God replaces the enmity of the carnal mind. Instead of condemnation there is peace with God. The fruits of the Spirit replace the works of the flesh. Surely it is not in the nature of so mighty a change wrought within us, nor consistent with the greatness of the privileges into which it brings us, that we should be left without any assurance of either.

There is for us a new life ; a Christian life ; a life of Christian duty. There are many duties. They require the faithful service of Christ, piety toward God, and charity toward men. The fulfillment of these duties is possible only with the activity of our moral and religious affections. They must be purposely and consciously performed. Such performance requires the proper motives of piety and charity. Such a life cannot be hidden from the personal consciousness. We must be capable of knowing whether our life is such ; of knowing when it is such. It is, therefore, in the very nature of such a life to make itself known in our personal consciousness, and hence to give us assurance of its possession.

3. *Sources of Assurance.*—It has already appeared that there are two sources of assurance : the witness of the Holy Spirit, and the witness of our own spirit. The fact of a witness of our own spirit will be sufficiently shown in the treatment of its nature ; therefore it need not be separately considered.

Not a few deny the witness of the Holy Spirit. Yet the fact has sure ground in the Scriptures. There is sufficient proof in a single text : “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”<sup>1</sup> On a denial of the meaning which we claim for this text all reference to the Holy Spirit as a personal agent must be denied to this chapter.<sup>2</sup> Such

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii.

denial is worse than groundless. In proof of this we glance at a few of the references: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Here the Spirit must mean, not the gracious freedom attained, but the personal agent who achieves it. "If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." This indwelling of the Spirit cannot mean simply a spiritual state or pious disposition. In a far deeper sense of Scripture, Christians are "the temple of the Holy Ghost," and the "habitation of God through the Spirit." These facts must mean a personal presence or indwelling of the Holy Spirit. "But ye have received the Spirit of adoption." Here the Spirit of adoption must mean, not the filial disposition of an adopted child, but the divine Spirit through whose agency we become the children of adoption. This meaning is thoroughly scriptural. So the words respecting the witness of the Spirit to our sonship, as above cited, cannot be interpreted in the sense of a filial disposition which assures us of adoption, but must mean a distinct and direct witness of the Spirit himself. The fact of such a witness of the Spirit will further appear in the treatment of his testimony.

If this were a solitary instance of the personal agency of the Spirit, or even a rare instance, we might feel less confident of our position; but it is not even rare: the Scriptures are replete with such instances. In our discussion of the personality and divinity of the Spirit we found many in the works of creation and providence, in the dispensations of religion, and notably in the economy of redemption. Through his personal agency we are born into the kingdom of God and constituted his children. So the witness of the Spirit to our sonship is an instance of his personal agency in perfect accord with his manifold offices in the work of our salvation. This fact confirms the truth of his personal witnessing to our adoption.

MANY INSTANCES OF HIS AGENCY.

## II. WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

1. *A Distinct Witness.*—Two or more witnesses may jointly testify to the same thing, but each is a distinct witness. Such a witness is the Holy Spirit to our sonship. The fact is in the meaning of these words: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."<sup>1</sup> The original word here used for witnessing—*συμμαρτυρέω*—means two or more witnesses jointly, yet distinctly, testifying to the same thing. As two are here designated, the word in this instance

TWO OR MORE WITNESSES.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii, 16.

means no more. It cannot mean less. Such is the force of *σύν* in composition with *μαρτυρέω*. Many authorities might easily be cited for this interpretation.

It was in view of the original word that Mr. Wesley said: "It is manifest, here are two witnesses mentioned, who together testify the same thing: the Spirit of God, and AUTHORITIES. our own spirit."<sup>1</sup> "The apostle's term, *συνμαρτυρέω*, 'beareth witness with,' is the very term which was used in the Greek language to denote a concurrence of testimony, where more than one witness testified to the same thing." "I have never found the word used in a different sense by any writer in any one instance."<sup>2</sup> This testimony is given after much research, and numerous authorities are cited in its support. We add other testimonies: "The words in the original evidently imply the sense which our translators follow. . . . *Συνμαρτυρεῖν* signifies to be a fellow-witness, or to witness the same thing that another does; and so the word constantly signifies in Scripture, and is never used but where there is a concurrent evidence of two witnesses."<sup>3</sup> "For the concurrence of the two witnesses the critical testimony is overwhelming."<sup>4</sup> Many authorities, both classical and ecclesiastical, are given in confirmation of this meaning.

If such be the meaning of this text, as surely it is, the Holy Spirit must be a distinct witness to our sonship. If THE SPIRIT A  
DISTINCT WIT-  
NESS. the sense of two witnesses be disputed, or even disproved, what must follow? Not that the text does not mean a distinct witness of the Spirit, but that it does not mean a witness of our own spirit. On a denial of two witnesses the rendering must be: "The Spirit itself beareth witness to our spirit, that we are the children of God." Such a rendering is entirely consistent with the form of words in the phrase *τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν*; and if the true one, the meaning must be that our own spirit is simply recipient of the testimony of the Spirit; and in no other form of words could a distinct personal witnessing of the Spirit to our sonship be more clearly or definitely expressed. With such a result it would still remain true that there is a witness of our own spirit to our sonship, though the proof of it could no longer be found in this text. On either view, therefore, a distinct witnessing of the Holy Spirit must be accepted as a truth of the A CONFIRMA-  
TORY TEXT. Scriptures. We add a single text in confirmation: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his

<sup>1</sup> *Sermons*, vol. i, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> Walton: *Witness of the Spirit*, pp. 84, 222.

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Sherlock: *Works*, vol. i, pp. 154, 155.

<sup>4</sup> Young: *Witness of the Spirit*, Fernley Lecture, 1882, p. 86.

Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”<sup>1</sup> These words cannot be interpreted on the ground of a merely filial disposition of the children of God as the witness to our adoption, but must mean the testimony of the Spirit himself. Hence the text proves a distinct witnessing of the Spirit to our sonship.

2. *A Direct Witness.*—If the Holy Spirit is a distinct witness to our adoption he must be a direct witness. Any other interpretation must merge his testimony into that of our own spirit; and thus we should have only one witness and one testimony instead of two witnesses and a distinct testimony of each. The error of such an interpretation is not rare. We here give an instance: “The part that the Spirit of God hath had in this matter is, that he both graves upon us the lineaments of a living epistle of Jesus Christ, and tells us in the epistle of a written revelation what these lineaments are. The part which our own spirit has is, that, with the eye of consciousness, we read what is in ourselves; and, with the eye of the understanding, we read what is in the book of God’s testimony: and upon our perceiving that such as the marks of grace which we find to be within, so are the marks of grace which we observe in the description of that word without that the Spirit hath indited, we arrive at the conclusion that we are born of God.”<sup>2</sup> In this view there are two works of the Spirit, as concerned in our assurance of a state of grace: one, a work of inspiration whereby he describes, in a written revelation, the distinctive characteristics of a child of God; the other, a work of regeneration whereby these characteristics are wrought in us. But in all this there is no direct witness of the Spirit to our sonship; indeed, no proper witnessing in any form. The citation is a very accurate statement of the witness of our own spirit, but of that only; and the formal manner in which it is made not only omits all witness of the Spirit, but really excludes it. In this it is openly contrary to the Scriptures, in the clearest sense of which, as we have seen, the Holy Spirit is not only an actual witness, but a distinct and direct witness, to our sonship.

Another instance may be given in order to set forth the more clearly this error of interpretation. “The power to do good comes from the influence of the Holy Spirit; and therefore the good we do is such an evidence of our being the sons of God as we stand obliged to the Spirit of God for. . . . The great privileges mentioned in this chapter,<sup>3</sup> such as being made free from the law of sin and death, of walking, not after the flesh, but the

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Chalmers: *Lectures on Romans*, p. 275.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. viii.

ERRONEOUS  
INTERPRETA-  
TION.

CHALMERS.

ALLOWS NO  
WITNESS OF  
THE SPIRIT.

SHERLOCK.

Spirit, being such as we receive from the Spirit of God, are therefore evidences of the Spirit for our regeneration.”<sup>1</sup> In this view the witness of the Spirit is given simply and solely through the fruits of his gracious work within us. As we consciously possess the fruits of this work, so are we assured that we are the children of God. This, however, is simply the witness of our own spirit, and all proper witnessing of the Spirit is excluded. Thus the learned bishop, after clearly showing us that the Spirit is a distinct witness, wholly excludes him by a wrong interpretation of his testimony.

The witness of the Spirit is given neither through his work of regeneration whereby we become the children of God, nor through the fruits of the new spiritual life, but by an immediate operation within our consciousness in a manner to assure us of the gracious sonship. The state of sonship is prior to this testimony. “The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” It is thus manifest that the witness of the Spirit is to a sonship already existing. Therefore his testimony cannot be given through the work of regeneration whereby the sonship is constituted, but must be given directly within the consciousness of believers in Christ.

There is an argument much in use for the proof of a direct witness of the Spirit, which we think of doubtful validity, and also of doubtful propriety: of doubtful validity, because it proceeds upon a mistaken view of facts; and of doubtful propriety, because it may easily lead to a merging of the witness of the Spirit into that of our own spirit. Yet it is an argument much in favor with the best Wesleyan writers on this subject, including Mr. Wesley himself.<sup>2</sup> We are not unmindful of the respect due to such authors.

The argument assumes a priority of the witness of the Spirit, as compared with that of our own spirit; assumes it as the necessary ground of the fruits of grace through which our own spirit witnesses. If the facts be such, or if the experiences through which our spirit witnesses have their immediate and only source in the witness of the Holy Spirit to our sonship, then must he be a direct witness. Such is the argument. We here

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Sherlock: Works, vol. i, pp. 157, 158.

<sup>2</sup> Wesley: *Sermons*, vol. i, p. 88; Watson: *Sermons*, vol. ii, pp. 347, 348; Walton: *Witness of the Spirit*, pp. 42-47; Prest: *The Witness of the Spirit*, pp. 140-142; Young: *The Witness of the Spirit*, p. 61.

give an instance of its construction : “ But is it not obvious to you, that love to God directly implies the knowledge of his love to us, as our reconciled Father? God’s love to us is the cause of our love to him, and must therefore be known by us before we can love him. So, too, as to peace. Can we have this before we know whether we are at peace with God, before we know that his anger is turned away from us? What is the cause of the distress of that penitent mourner in sin? He tells you, and he tells you truly, that it is because God is angry with him. Now, how do you propose to calm his agitation? You tell him that he is to examine himself, whether he has peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and that, if he has, he may then infer that God’s anger is turned away from him; that is, he feels he has not either peace or joy, and you tell him that, in order that he may obtain them, he is to construct an argument whose basis is that both peace and joy are already in his possession. Brethren, love, and peace, and joy are all fruits of the Spirit, ‘given unto us,’ on our ‘being justified by faith,’ as the Spirit of adoption. The graces which the apostle enumerates constitute ‘the fruit of the Spirit;’ but his very first work, on our believing, and that by which this fruit is produced, is to bear witness to our adoption into God’s family, and thus to enable us to call God our Father. The fruits of the Spirit flow from the witness of the Spirit.”<sup>1</sup>

The argument mistakes the source of the experiences through which our own spirit witnesses to our sonship. It attributes them to the witness of the Holy Spirit, whereas they spring in fact from his work of regeneration. The witness of the Spirit cannot produce them, because it is not in itself renewing or sanctifying. Without the inner change wrought by regeneration no assurance of adoption could yield the spiritual fruits of peace, and love, and joy. With their source in regeneration, the assurance of sonship through the witness of the Spirit may give them a deeper and richer tone, but it cannot be their original source. Regeneration is a mighty work which at once reveals itself in the consciousness of the soul, even in peace, and love, and joy. Therein the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and instantly flows back in love to God. And the Spirit’s “very first work, on our believing, and that by which this fruit is produced, is,” not “to bear witness to our adoption,” but to renew us in the image of God; not to assure us that we are the children of God, but to constitute us his children through the work of regeneration. An appeal is made to the case of the penitent, full of fear and trembling:

<sup>1</sup> Watson : *Sermons*, vol. ii p. 348.



“ You tell him that he is to examine himself, whether he has peace and joy,” that he may be assured of the divine favor. THE CASE OF A PENITENT. No, we would not so direct him ; nor would the Holy Spirit witness to his adoption, and so assure him of the loving favor of God. The one thing for such a penitent to do is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, whereon he shall receive forgiveness and be born of God. Through this mighty change, whence the fruits of the Spirit so promptly spring, he becomes a child of God ; and his own spirit will be instant with the Holy Spirit in witnessing to his adoption. The groundless assumption that the experiences through which our own spirit witnesses to our sonship are the immediate fruit of the Spirit’s witnessing, and are else impossible, leaves this argument without validity.

The argument is objectionable in other points. There is too much detail in the matter to which the Spirit is held to witness. There is thus included a direct assurance OTHER OBJECTIONABLE POINTS. of forgiveness, of the love of God therein, and of an heirship to eternal life. Now, while the Scriptures are specially definite respecting sonship as the matter of assurance, so much addition by detail must be of questionable propriety. It is true that, with the assurance of sonship, we receive the assurance of these other blessings, but not without the witness of our own spirit. Further, if, as this argument maintains, peace, and love, and joy, with many other gracious experiences, are the immediate fruit of the Spirit’s witnessing to our sonship, it is but a short and easy step to the conclusion that his witness is given simply and only through these fruits. But we should thus merge his witnessing into that of our own spirit, and hence lose the direct witness of the Spirit in the very argument so much relied upon for its proof.

3. *Manner of the Witnessing.*—It is easier to state the result of the Spirit’s witnessing than to explain the mode of his agency. The result is the assurance of a gracious sonship. The assurance is produced by an immediate operation of the Spirit within the mind of a believer in Christ. This, however, is merely the statement of a fact, not any explanation of its mode. There is no manifestation of the Spirit apart from the assurance which he produces. There is neither outer nor inner voice whereby he reveals himself, nor any direct communication to our intelligence, but simply an operation within the mind whereby he produces the assurance of adoption. In this respect AN OPERATION WITHIN THE MIND. the mode of the operation is the same as in the work AS IN CONVICTION FOR SIN. of conviction. There is such a work of the Spirit ; and it is one

of the offices which he is ever fulfilling.<sup>1</sup> The fact of sin is thus brought home to the heart and conscience of men. There may be instances in which some truth or providence is used as a means; but there is no limitation to such instrumentality. When no awakening truth is present to the mind; when no event elicits serious reflection; when all the surroundings lead the mind far away from the thought of sin—even at such a time the Holy Spirit directly touches the springs of moral feeling, quickens the conscience, and instantly there is the deep sense of sin and peril. So, by an operation equally immediate, he produces in the mind of a believer in Christ the persuasion or confidence of sonship. Such is the witness of the Spirit.

The mode of the Spirit in this witnessing remains a mystery; yet the resulting assurance of sonship is none the less real REALITY IN THE MYSTERY. or precious. This is not the only instance of mystery in the work of the Spirit. His work of inspiration is equally such, but without any detriment to the truths of religion thus given to the world. Such too is his work of regeneration; but the new spiritual life and the sonship into which we are born are none the less real or blessed. There is for us an utter mystery in the perceptions of the ear and the eye; but sounds are just as sweet and scenes are just as beautiful as if we understood their mode. So it is respecting the assurance of sonship through the witness of the Spirit.

### III. WITNESS OF OUR OWN SPIRIT.

1. *Nature of the Testimony.*—In this case the witnessing is indirect or mediate, and proceeds on a comparison of certain facts of religious experience and life with the relative facts of MODE OF THE WITNESSING. Scripture. The Scriptures clearly note the distinctive and determining facts of this gracious sonship. We find such facts in our own experience and life. When, therefore, on a proper comparison, we discover an exact or, at least, real accordance between these facts within us and those within the Scriptures, we receive the witness of our spirit that we are the children of God. It is true that this witnessing comes to us in the form of an inference, but it is a thoroughly warranted inference, and therefore truly assuring. These statements may here suffice, as the nature of this witnessing will more clearly appear in the illustrations which immediately follow.

2. *Illustrations of the Witnessing.*—Sonship is a state of peace with God. PEACE. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in

<sup>1</sup> John xvi, 8-11.

Christ Jesus."<sup>1</sup> On the one side is condemnation ; on the other, peace. The difference between these states, as they enter into our religious experience, is very real ; so real that we can readily determine which is our own state. If we find in ourselves the sense of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, that peace witnesses to our sonship.<sup>2</sup>

The children of God love him : " Beloved, let us love one another : for love is of God ; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."<sup>3</sup> It is true that LOVE. brotherly love is foremost in this text, but clearly it also means that those who are born of God love him. We thereby test ourselves. We read in the Scriptures : " The carnal mind is enmity against God ;"<sup>4</sup> and we are sure that such is not the state of our own mind. We read again : " Love is of God ; and every one that loveth is born of God ;" and we are sure that such is our own experience. We thus have the witness of our own spirit that we are born of God, and therefore are his children.

It is characteristic of the children of God that they love one another. " We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." " If we love BROTHERLY LOVE. one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."<sup>5</sup> It is easy to apply this test. And if we find in ourselves this love, love for the children of God because they are his children, then shall we have the witness of our own spirit to the truth of our sonship.

A truly filial spirit is the spirit of obedience to God. Such is the spirit of all who are in a truly regenerate state. On OBEDIENCE. the other hand, the possession of such a spirit is the proof of such a state. " If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."<sup>6</sup> If we have the consciousness of such a filial disposition as a ruling force in our life, then have we the sure evidence of a truly regenerate state, and the witness of our own spirit that we are the children of God.

The children of God are led by the Holy Spirit : " For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT. God."<sup>7</sup> The life of any one so led must be in the fruits of the Spirit, not in the works of the flesh.<sup>8</sup> Each of these lives is such in its facts that it must reveal itself in the personal consciousness. Further, the two are in such wide contrast that we may readily determine which we are living. This is manifestly the case in view of their characterization and distinction in the

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v, 1 ; viii, 1.<sup>2</sup> 1 John iii, 19-21.<sup>3</sup> 1 John iv, 7.<sup>4</sup> Rom. viii, 7.<sup>5</sup> 1 John iii, 14 ; iv, 12.<sup>6</sup> 1 John ii, 29.<sup>7</sup> Rom. viii, 14.<sup>8</sup> Rom. viii, 4-10.

Scriptures.<sup>1</sup> Now every one whose life is in the fruits of the Spirit is led by the Spirit of God, and therefore must be a child of God. Hence every one whose life is consciously such must have the witness of his own spirit that he is a child of God. Such is the witness of our own spirit to this sonship.

3. *Process of the Witnessing.*—There is really a logical process. This is manifest in the nature of the witnessing, as previously stated, and also in the several illustrations which we have given. However, it does not follow that this process must be formally conducted before our own spirit can give its assuring testimony. Even in its reasoning the mind often moves with great rapidity, and reaches the result almost instantly; so that the process is scarcely appreciable in time, or even observable in consciousness. Such is the case here. The peace and joy received in conversion are anticipated, and therefore bear instant testimony to our adoption. Such is the case in many instances. There are exceptions. Instances are not wanting in which there is a gradual manifestation of the gracious change. Here there must be a gradual witnessing of our own spirit. In such instances the witness of the Holy Spirit is in a like gradual manner. This is entirely consistent with his part in the work of assurance. His testimony need not be instantly full because it is immediate.

In the Christian life the witness of our own spirit may be promptly given. Here, however, much depends upon the depth of experience and the fullness of consecration. If the religious life is low and the evidences of a gracious state correspondingly feeble, we need the more of them, and hence must institute a wider comparison of our experience and life with the Scripture notes of this state, in order to an assuring witness of our own spirit. The same course may be necessary in seasons of temptation or trial, wherein the soul is brought into heaviness or doubt. Usually, however, with a living experience and a true consecration, the witness of our own spirit is so promptly given that we scarcely observe any process, and seemingly our assurance is an abiding state of mind.

#### IV. THE ASSURANCE GIVEN.

1. *Subjectively One.*—While assurance is the result of a twofold witnessing, yet as a mental state it is single, not double. It is such notwithstanding the profound difference between the witnesses and the modes of their witnessing.

<sup>1</sup> Gal. v, 16-25.

There is not one form of assurance from the witness of the Spirit and another from that of our own spirit, but a single, simple state of confidence springing from the joint witnessing of the two. There is nothing really singular in this. Through many and widely diverse evidences we may reach the certainty of some truth which deeply concerns us ; the evidences are multiform, but in the eye of consciousness the assurance attained is purely unitary. So the assurance of sonship received from the joint testimony of the two witnesses is subjectively one.

We are thus prepared even easily to dispose of what has been regarded as a very serious difficulty respecting the witness of the Spirit. It is a fact that some men of an intense Christian experience, and thoroughly observant of all the facts of their religious consciousness, deny a direct witness of the Spirit. We may instance Dr. Chalmers : " I could not, without making my own doctrine outstrip my own experience, vouch for any other intimation of the Spirit of God than that which he gives in the act of making the word of God clear unto you, and the state of your own heart clear unto you."<sup>1</sup> He thus limits assurance, just as in a passage previously cited from him, to the witness of our own spirit, and also denies to his own experience all recognition of a direct witness of the Holy Spirit. How then can we reconcile this denial with the fact of such a witness, and a witness surely possessed by the great and good Chalmers himself ? Very easily on our own interpretation of the doctrine. We have seen that in the work of assurance the Spirit makes no direct communication to the intelligence, nor in any way reveals himself, but simply by an immediate operation within the consciousness produces the assurance of a gracious sonship. We have also seen that the two witnessings coalesce in a purely unitary state of assurance, wherein consciousness observes no distinction between the two. Therefore the assurance of Dr. Chalmers was subjectively the very same that it would have been with his fullest belief in the fact of a direct witness of the Spirit. Hence there was nothing in his experience in the least contrariety to the reality of such a witness.

2. *Variable in Degree.*—Assurance admits of degrees ; and there are many reasons for its actual variations. In the instance of regeneration, whereby we are born into this sonship, many things may vary the strength of its manifestation in our consciousness. Prior habits of life are very different. Temperaments widely differ. Some are gentle in their emotional nature ;

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on Romans*, p. 276.

others, very intense. There are wide differences in the intensity of conviction and contrition. All these facts must have a determining influence upon the strength of our assurance of the new birth. The results of such facts must enter into the experiences of our Christian life, with a like determining influence therein. This is specially true of our personal temperament. Some are timid, doubting, hesitant, respecting their own spiritual good; others are joyous, hopeful, confident. These differences must greatly vary the strength of assurance.

Then there are wide differences in the actual Christian life, differences in the depths of experience and the measure of spiritual consecration. The assurance of sonship must vary accordingly. The witness of our own spirit cannot be as strongly assuring where the experience and consecration are but slight as where they are deep and full. Further, the witness of the Holy Spirit must usually correspond in the degree of its strength with that of our own spirit. A full assurance from his witnessing where the actual Christian life is in a low state would not only be false to the truth, but would also be a very serious peril to the soul. Yet, with all these reasons of variation, the comfortable assurance of a gracious sonship is a common Christian privilege.

3. *Thoroughly Valid.*—The Holy Spirit is surely a thoroughly competent and trustworthy witness. Through his own agency are we born into this sonship, and he must have perfect knowledge of the result of his own work. When, therefore, by an immediate operation within our religious consciousness he assures us of this sonship, there can be no error in his witnessing. As by immediate inspiration, and in a manner entirely apart from the usual modes of knowledge, he gave to prophets and apostles the highest forms of divine truth, and the knowledge of events both past and future; as by direct action upon the moral feelings he produces the deep sense of sin and peril; so in a like mode of his agency he can and does produce in our religious consciousness the assurance that we are the children of God. In this gracious work neither mistake nor deception is possible with the Holy Spirit; and the assurance which he gives is thoroughly valid.

We have already explained the witness of our own spirit, and here present it simply in the light of its validity. The Scripture notes of this sonship are surely true; and they are so clearly and fully given that we may surely know them. Then all that we further require is such a knowledge of like facts in our own experience that we may know their agreement with

REASONS IN  
ACTUAL LIFE.

FROM THE WIT-  
NESS OF THE  
SPIRIT.

NO ERROR  
THEREIN.

FROM THE WIT-  
NESS OF OUR  
OWN SPIRIT.

those Scripture notes. Can we have such knowledge of these facts? Surely we can; and for the reason that they are facts of experience. In the very nature of them they must be such. Only through a very great change do we enter into this sonship. There is a transition from darkness into light; from death into life; from the bondage of sin into the liberty of the Gospel; from condemnation into peace with God; from the unrest and trouble of sin into a reposing trust in his love. Such a transition must clearly manifest itself in our deepest consciousness. These new experiences abide with us in our Christian life, and daily manifest themselves in our consciousness. When therefore we institute a comparison of these surely known facts of experience with the Scripture notes of this gracious sonship, and find their close agreement clearly open to our view, then the witness of our own spirit that we are the children of God must be thoroughly trustworthy. With the joint testimony of two such witnesses assurance itself is thoroughly valid.

Wesley : *Sermons*, x-xii; Chalmers : *On Romans*, lect. liv; Sherlock : *Works*, vol. i, Discourse viii; Walton : *Witness of the Spirit*; Watson : *Sermons*, civ; Prest : *The Witness of the Spirit*; Davies : *Treatise on Justification*, lect. x; Young : *The Witness of the Spirit*, Fernley Lecture, 1882; Bishop Merrill : *Aspects of Christian Experience*, chap. x.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SANCTIFICATION.

THE term sanctification is in frequent use, particularly with Methodists, for the expression of a full salvation or a completeness of the Christian life. It is not in itself adequate to such expression, for the reason that it is often used in Scripture in a lower sense, or without the idea of completeness.<sup>1</sup> Hence in its doctrinal use it is often accompanied with the word entire; so that the full expression is entire sanctification. This is not without warrant in the words of St. Paul wherein he prayed that the Christians of Thessalonica might be wholly sanctified.<sup>2</sup>

Other words or formulas are also in use: such as holiness, Christian perfection, the higher Christian life, Christian purity, love enthroned; but such formulas are merely representative of the doctrine, not the full expression of its content. Hence, which shall be used is a matter of mere individual preference. The doctrine itself is the question of interest.

## I. MEANING OF SANCTIFICATION.

Holiness in man is a moral or religious state; sanctification, a gracious work of God whereby that state is produced. Without the former there is no place for the latter. That God is holy is a reason for holiness in ourselves: "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."<sup>3</sup> There was no such an idea in Greek thought; not even the idea of the divine holiness. This being the case, there could be no such reason in the Greek mind for personal holiness. Hence new meanings were necessary to the Greek words appropriated for the expression of these purely biblical ideas.<sup>4</sup>

As the divine holiness is a reason for Christian holiness there must be a likeness between the two. This is possible notwithstanding the infinite fullness of the one and the narrow limitations of the other—just as it was possible for man to

<sup>1</sup> Wesley: *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, pp. 50, 51.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. v, 23.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. i, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Cremer: *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek*, "Αγιος.



be originally created in the image or likeness of God. However, no true view of the subject can ever overlook that difference. There is another point of difference: the divine holiness is an eternal possession, while Christian holiness is always an attainment. The latter fact gives propriety to the use of the word sanctification, which means a holiness wrought in us by a gracious work of God.

A thorough study of the biblical terms of sanctification might be helpful in this discussion, but it would require an STUDY OF BIBLICAL TERMS. elaboration for which we have no room. There are convenient sources of information for any who may wish to engage in this study.<sup>1</sup> It will suffice for our own purpose that we treat such terms as we have occasion to set forth their meaning.

1. *Ceremonial Sanctification.*—While the terms of sanctification have a far deeper meaning, as we shall point out, they are sometimes used in the sense of a setting apart from secular to sacred uses, a consecration to God and religion. Here the meaning is the same in application to both things and persons. Thus OF THINGS AND PERSONS. places, altars, offerings, the tabernacle, and the temple were sanctified. In the same sense there was a sanctification of the priests, and also of the Jewish people. The verb *ἁγιάζω* is thus used.<sup>2</sup> Even our Lord was thus sanctified.<sup>3</sup> Here, however, all idea of any prior ceremonial impurity is utterly excluded. The word *ἅγιος*, which expresses the result or state of sanctification, is used in like manner; that is, in the sense of a ceremonial sanctification of both things and persons.<sup>4</sup> While such a form THE LESSON. of sanctification is without any strictly ethical character, yet it served a valuable purpose in the Hebraic economy. It was a primary lesson in the divine education of the Hebrew people up to the true idea of holiness.<sup>5</sup>

We may here note the fact that these terms of sanctification are sometimes used in the sense of veneration or reverence. AS REVERENCE. They thus mean a devout and worshipful state of mind respecting God. Here is an instance: “This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me.”<sup>6</sup> The *trisagion* of Isaiah—“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts”—is the expression of adoring reverence.<sup>7</sup> The first petition in our

<sup>1</sup> Lexicons of the Greek Testament, severally by Cremer, Robinson, and Thayer; Lowrey: *The Possibilities of Grace*, pp. 42-66; Beet: *Holiness as Understood by the Writers of the Bible*; Franklin: *Review of Wesleyan Perfection*, part ii.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. viii, 10-12; Matt. xxiii, 17, 19; 2 Tim. ii, 21.

<sup>3</sup> John x, 36.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. vii, 6; xxiv, 15; Luke ii, 23; Acts vii, 33.

<sup>5</sup> Walker: *Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation*, chap. vii.

<sup>6</sup> Lev. x, 3.

<sup>7</sup> Isa. vi, 3.

Lord's Prayer—"Hallowed be thy name"—*ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομα σου*—is replete with the same spirit.<sup>1</sup> Such too is the meaning of the commandment: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts."<sup>2</sup>

Such an adoring reverence is possible only with a deep sense of the divine holiness. There is much in the greatness and majesty of God, much in his mighty works, much in the thought of his infinite knowledge and power, to awaken admiration and awe; much in his justice to inspire fear; much in his love to kindle a grateful love in us; but not without the sense of his absolute holiness can we bow to him in adoring reverence. This is the spirit of the heavenly worship: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."<sup>3</sup>

2. *Deeper Moral Sense.*—The distinction here is between the ceremonial and the moral forms of sanctification. The first is outward and official; the second, inward and of the moral and religious nature.

Regeneration furnishes the best exemplification of this work. In the full extent of it, regeneration is of the nature of sanctification. This was shown in our treatment of that subject. It must be such from the very ground of its necessity, which lies in the depravity or corruption of our moral nature. The removal of this corruption is possible only through an interior purification. Such purification is the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, so far as it is therein accomplished. It is hence true that, in the full extent of it, regeneration is of the nature of sanctification; and whatever be the work of sanctification, as distinctively held, it cannot be different in kind. Certainly we have in regeneration the best exemplification of its nature.

3. *Entire Sanctification.*—The meaning of entire sanctification is obvious in the light of what has preceded. If regeneration were so thorough as to complete the subjective purification there could be no place for the special work of sanctification. In case of serious degeneration, as in some instances in the churches of Corinth and Galatia, there would be need of a renewed purification; but it would be accomplished by a renewed work of regeneration, if regeneration were primarily complete sanctification. The theory then is that regeneration is not in its primary work complete sanctification; that it does not immediately produce a fullness of the inner spiritual life. The doctrine is under no necessity of assuming that this is never the case, particularly so far as the subjective state is concerned. We could not affirm that there are no exceptions; and,

REGENERATION  
INCOMPLETE.

EXCEPTIONS.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi, 9.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. iii, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. iv, 8.

not only for the reason that we see no doctrinal necessity for it, but also because some, even from the hour of their conversion, give constant proof of a fullness of the spiritual life, if not in its maturity yet in its entirety. Mr. Wesley himself never denied the possibility, nor even the actuality, of such instances, though he thought them rare, even if ever actual. The common fact is that of incompleteness. Hence it is the definite work of entire sanctification to complete the subjective purification. So far the statement is simple and easily made; but a philosophy of the facts is no easy attainment. They will be more fully considered in the next section.

4. *Two Spheres of the Sanctification.*—We think it important to observe that there are two spheres of sanctification, as the doctrine is distinctively held: one within the moral nature; the other within the actual Christian life. The two are closely related, the former being the necessary ground of the latter. Only as the nature is sanctified can the life be in holiness. But the perfection or maturity of the Christian graces is not an immediate product of the subjective purification. Hence the importance of distinguishing the two spheres, so that we shall not fall into the error of maintaining the doctrine of an instant attainment of perfection in such graces. Here the law of growth must be admitted. On the other hand, in the light of this distinction we may see the more clearly the possibility of an instant subjective purification.

IMPORTANCE  
OF THE DIS-  
TINCTION.

## II. SANCTIFICATION OF THE NATURE.

1. *Incomplete in Regeneration.*—The doctrine of an incompleteness of the work of regeneration underlies that of entire sanctification, particularly in its Wesleyan form.

THE CATHOLIC  
DOCTRINE.

Without such incompleteness there could be no place for the definite second-blessing view. That somewhat of depravity remains in the regenerate, or that regeneration does not bring to completeness the inner spiritual life, is a widely accepted doctrine. Indeed, exceptions are so few that the doctrine must be regarded as truly catholic. However, it does not necessarily carry with it the doctrine of entire sanctification as a possible attainment in the present life. Hence many who hold the former deny the latter. On the other hand, the impossibility of such sanctification is no consequence of the incompleteness of regeneration. The grace which therein so largely purifies our nature surely can wholly cleanse it. Hence there is place for the doctrine of entire sanctification as an attainable blessing in the present life.

The question of a remnant of depravity is not without perplexity. As the nature of depravity as a whole is difficult for thought, so that of a remnant, not different in kind from the whole, is difficult. Consequently, there is perplexity in the notion of entire sanctification.

It must not be overlooked that the Scriptures represent the corruption or depravity of human nature in figurative forms, nor that the figures are taken from the physical plane. The same is true of the forms in which the cleansing or purification of the soul is expressed. Thus the subjective state of evil is represented as one of filthiness or uncleanness; and, accordingly, the sanctification is represented as a cleansing or washing or purifying.<sup>1</sup> But for any true conception of either the corruption or the cleansing we must look through the physical imagery and seek to grasp in thought the spiritual realities which it represents. Here, however, is the very point of difficulty—the difficulty of grasping in clear thought the spiritual things which lie back of these physical representations.

If depravity existed in the soul in the form of a substance, as poison exists in a living body, or alien elements in water, or alloy in gold, not only the notion of its nature, but also the notion of sanctification, and whether in part or in whole, would be simple. Remove all the poison from the living body, all alien elements from the water, all alloy from the gold, and in each case the purification is complete. In such a sense the removal of all remnants of depravity would be entire sanctification.

But the view is purely physical, and hence can afford no clearness of conception. It is too Manichæan for any truly Christian theology. Depravity is a moral state of the soul, not a substance within it. These facts should not be overlooked in the treatment of entire sanctification. They clearly show that, whatever the certainty of its possibility, or even of its actuality, the nature of it cannot be directly apprehended in thought. The repetitions use of the figurative terms respecting remnants, and roots, and alloys, and sediments cannot exactly define the incompleteness of regeneration; nor can such use of the physical terms of washing and eradication exactly define the purely spiritual work of entire sanctification. It is useless to assume an unattainable clearness of view on these questions; and the proper recognition of such obscurity as we have pointed out might save us from unseemly pretensions, not only to a perfect conception of the inner nature of sanctification, but also to an actual presentation of

<sup>1</sup> Psa. li, 2, 7; Ezek. xxxvi, 25; 1 Cor. vi, 11; 2 Cor. vii, 1.

it with perfect clearness both in itself and in its distinction from regeneration.

Some clearly see the obscurity at this point ; if not in their own view, yet in the view of others. "In entering, some years since, upon a re-examination of the difficult subject of holiness, I found that all the light which I had previously received, whether from reading, instruction, or meditation, was inadequate to the demands of my own reason, and also to answer the numerous inquiries propounded to me by my discriminating pupils. Unsatisfied and wearied with all that I had ever seen or heard in explanation of its unexplained mysteries, I sat down, not to reading and collating, but to patient and prayerful thought."<sup>1</sup> These are the utterances of a mind thoroughly candid in temper, rarely acute in analytic power, and clear in philosophic insight. Their date is 1871. To the mind of Dr. McCabe such was then the obscurity of this subject in all former presentations of it.

"Every effort I have made to define clearly to my own mind precisely what is meant by sin in believers has deepened the conviction that the subject is one of manifold difficulty, and about which there is great confusedness of thought. I find evidences of obscurity in all the writings about it. The most eminent divines are not clear. They all agree in the fact ; but when they attempt to explain they become confused. The difficulty is to make plain what that sin is from which Christian men are not free, which remains in, or is found still cleaving to, believers ; how to discriminate between the some sin that is removed in regeneration and the some sin that remains. And it is just around this point that revolves the whole question of entire sanctification, both as to what it is and its possibility."<sup>2</sup> Such are the statements of this writer after a careful study of our best authorities on the question. Surely these testimonies strongly favor the suggestion of less pretension to a thorough clearness of the doctrine.

However, as the truth of native depravity is not conditioned on a capacity in us fully to apprehend it, or clearly interpret it in thought, so the truth of a remnant of depravity after regeneration is not so conditioned. In each case the inner state may be known through its activities, as manifest in our consciousness. There is another mode of information. By the observation of others, as to their tempers, words, and acts, we gain an insight into their inner nature, and may thus know its characteristic tendencies, whether to the good or the evil. In such manner we

<sup>1</sup> McCabe : *Light on the Pathway of Holiness*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Foster : *Christian Purity*, p. 117.

may have the proof of a remnant of depravity, whatever its own obscurity for thought. Hence there is here no mystery in the distinctive doctrine of entire sanctification which should discredit its reality, just as there is no mystery of regeneration which should discredit the reality of a large measure of sanctification therein.

On the broadest distinction there is for us the possibility of two lives—two alternatively : one in the flesh ; the other in the Spirit. The latter is possible only through the presence of the Spirit as a renewing and purifying power in the soul ; the former, inevitable in his absence. This does not mean that the subjective state of all in each class is precisely the same. If we judge the inner state of the unregenerate simply by the outer life we shall be constrained to admit wide differences therein, or at least the presence of moral forces which in many instances greatly restrain the natural tendencies of such a state. The real truth is that, with the reality of a common native depravity, there are degrees of moral perversity. So, if we judge the inner state of the regenerate by the outer life, we must admit the truth of differences therein ; that the spiritual life is far deeper in some than in others. There may be such a work of the Spirit within the soul as shall give completeness to the inner spiritual life ; but such completeness is rarely the work of regeneration. This is the view which underlies the distinctive doctrine of sanctification.

If direct proof of an incompleteness of regeneration, such as constitutes a necessity for the distinct work of sanctification, be demanded, what shall we offer ? We can hardly pretend to any direct or formal Scripture statement of such a fact. There are very definite statements respecting both the necessity and nature of justification, also respecting the necessity and nature of regeneration. On the latter question we may instance the words of our Lord.<sup>1</sup> Here the necessity for regeneration is definitely stated as lying in an inherited depravity of nature ; but not in all the Scriptures is there any such statement respecting a necessity for sanctification as lying in an incompleteness of regeneration. Certainly the truth of this statement cannot be questioned. What then ? Is it a truth which is adverse to the doctrine of sanctification ? No, not to the real truth of the doctrine ; though it may be adverse to some unwise teaching respecting it. The assumption of a definiteness which cannot be shown, and which does not exist, must be a weakness in any teaching. There is such a weakness of

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 3-7.

more or less teaching on this question. The failure to show the assumed definiteness in the Scripture ground of the doctrine is, in the view of many, the disproof of the doctrine. Here is the point where many halt.

We might adduce the consciousness of the newly regenerate, or even of the regenerate generally, in proof of an incompleteness of regeneration. Mostly, such have inner conflicts which accord with such incompleteness, and which would be out of accord with a state of entire sanctification. But we have already considered the question whether the Christian consciousness is a source of theology, and found it not to be such; hence we cannot admit it to a place of authority in this case. The Christian consciousness has its value for theology, not, however, as its source, but as confirmatory of its doctrines. It is confirmatory of any doctrine of the Scriptures with which it is in strict accord. But the Scriptures themselves must furnish the doctrine before the accordance can be known or the affirmation be of any doctrinal value. This is a principle which is not always properly observed. We mean no doctrinal dissent from Mr. Wesley if we say that in some instances, as recorded in his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, he gave too much doctrinal weight to individual professions of experience. That he so did is manifest in modifications of his own views.

But, while the Scriptures are without any explicit or formal utterance of an incompleteness of regeneration, yet the idea is clearly present in many forms of words respecting the new regenerate life, or even the regenerate life generally; so that the doctrine of such incompleteness may fairly claim for itself a sure basis in the Scriptures. Now, with the doctrine so found in the Scriptures, we may validly adduce the facts of Christian experience in its affirmation. There is widely in the consciousness of the regenerate a sense of incompleteness in their spiritual life; a sense of the lack of that fullness which is the happy experience of some Christians, and which must be the common privilege of believers. The doctrine thus grounded in the Scriptures and affirmed by the common Christian consciousness may easily command the common Christian faith, and be accepted as a doctrine of the weightiest practical concern. So far the elements of the doctrine of sanctification are clear and sure.

However, it should not be thought strange that some question the truth of this doctrine, or even oppose it. On the face of the Scriptures not a few things are seemingly against it. Other facts aside, we would most naturally think of regeneration as a complete

work of subjective purification. As we are born of the Spirit, so do we receive the impress of his own likeness. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh"—in the sense of depravity; and "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"—in the sense of holiness.<sup>1</sup> If the likeness is complete in the former case, why not in the latter? "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" "What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?"<sup>2</sup> We thus prove the native depravity of the race. Conversely, then, why should any uncleanness remain in the soul when it is born of the Holy Spirit? Further, it is clearly true that not a few texts adduced in proof of entire sanctification in some instances express simply the regenerate state; and if they mean a complete work in the one case, why should they mean an incomplete work in the other? Much might be added in the same line. However, the aim of these remarks is not to support this view, and thus to overthrow what we have before maintained, but rather to show a reason for charity toward such as do not accept it. They can hardly question the possibility of more or less degeneration in the regenerate life, and in such case must admit the need of its renewal. And if, with the completeness of regeneration, they hold, not only the possibility of such degeneration and the need of such renewal, but also the common privilege and duty of a wholly sanctified and consecrated life, they hold what is most vital in the doctrine of sanctification, and should be regarded as its friends, not as its enemies.

2. *Completion in Sanctification.*—The one distinction of entire sanctification, as compared with regeneration, lies in its completeness. The work of the Holy Spirit, as graciously wrought in the soul, is the same in kind in both. This fact opens the way to a clearer view of entire sanctification. As regeneration is, in the full extent of it, a purification of the nature, or an invigoration of the moral and religious powers, or both, so entire sanctification is a completion of the gracious work.

So far as we may grasp in thought the work of regeneration, we may also grasp that of entire sanctification. As before stated, we have no direct insight into the nature of depravity; but its characteristic tendencies or forms of activity are open to our observation; and so far as such facts are an expression of that nature we come to know what it is. Much of the natural history of man rests upon such ground. The same is true respecting the natural history of the animal

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Job xiv, 4; xv, 14.



orders. Through the observation of their habits of life we reach a clear notion of the tendencies of their nature. We thus know the ferocity of the tiger and the gentleness of the lamb. In like manner we know the subjective state of depravity in man; and so far we may know what must be the work of the Holy Spirit in his purification. Further, while we cannot accompany the Spirit as direct witnesses of his work within the soul, we may know its nature in the gracious fruits which immediately spring from it, as we observe them in the new life of its subjects. Indeed, we have a far deeper source of knowledge, even that of a conscious experience of the change thus wrought—a change so thorough that old things pass away and all things become new.<sup>1</sup>

We have no instance of any such change among the animal orders, and hence no illustration therein of this gracious work. The nature of the tiger is never changed into that of the lamb. Whatever the seeming docility induced by methods of training, they are as powerless for the effectuation of any real change of his nature as the flesh and blood of the lamb which for the hour may appease his voracious hunger. But among men there are innumerable examples of the transforming power of regeneration; indeed, innumerable witnesses of its actual experience.

EXAMPLES.

The facts thus presented are equally applicable to the work of entire sanctification. If somewhat of depravity remains in the regenerate, or there be any lack of thoroughness in the invigoration of the moral and religious powers, there is need of a deeper work, that both the cleansing and the invigoration may be complete. The need is the same in kind as in the case of regeneration, and the work of the Holy Spirit the same. As in a very large measure the work is wrought in regeneration, so is it completed in entire sanctification. The clearer spiritual discernment, the easier victory over temptation, the greater strength unto duty, the intenser love, and the closer communion with God answer to that completion. There are many examples of such a complete work, many witnesses to its attainment.

IN THE CASE  
OF ENTIRE  
SANCTIFICA-  
TION.

Is the inner work of entire sanctification in the mode of repression or in that of eradication? Such a question is in issue among the friends of the doctrine. Any thorough solution of it would require an insight into the metaphysical nature of depravity, and also into the metaphysical nature of regeneration, which we do not possess, and unto which we cannot attain.

MODE OF THE  
INNER WORK.

Bishop Foster clearly holds the view of repression;<sup>2</sup> also

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v, 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Christian Purity*, p. 74.

Beet.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Whedon is in full agreement with them: “ ‘Washed their robes’—purified their characters. This is a very vivid image of sanctification through the atonement. It illustrates how deep the doctrine of the atonement maintained in the Apocalypse. But we must look through the intense imagery at the literal fact, and not allow our imagination to be lost in the imagery. There is no literal robe, no literal washing of the robe in blood. What is true is that Christ died for our sins, and through the merit of his atonement the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon us, giving us power to resist temptation, to repress our disordered affections, and bring all into obedience to the law of Christ. And that is sanctification.”<sup>2</sup> In this characterization of the inner work of sanctification there is no word which means eradication, but there are words which mean repression or subjugation.

On the other hand, Dr. Lowrey maintains the side of eradication. His view is set forth in a criticism of the passage above cited from Dr. Whedon: “ ‘The first part of the note is a proper caution. But the doctrine of repression brought out in the second part, as definitive of sanctification, we must pronounce extremely erroneous. And to the positive assertion, ‘*And that is sanctification,*’ we have only to say, *And that is not sanctification.* Is power to resist temptation and repress disordered affections all that grace does for us? Then every unconverted man is sanctified, for he has natural power ‘to resist temptation and repress disordered affections.’ All codes of criminal laws are founded upon the assumption that every man has such power. And repressive obedience to the law of Christ, in the sense here mentioned, is possible to the natural man. Grace, then, does nothing more for us than resolution and good habits can do. The Greek here, and similar original words elsewhere, teach that grace penetrates into the texture of our spiritual being, and destroys ‘disordered’ affections by, as Dr. Chalmers says, ‘the expulsive power of a new affection.’ ”<sup>3</sup>

If the words of Dr. Whedon mean no more than appears in this criticism, he certainly falls far short of the truth of sanctification. But they may fairly mean much more; and it seems to us that he really meant much more in their use. Much of the same criticism might be made, and even more aptly, upon the state of regeneration, as usually maintained. In the doctrine of sanctification, in its truest Wesleyan form, there is conceded to the regenerate a power of repression or subjugation over the remnants of depravity. No other position is more fully maintained by Mr.

MEANING OF  
WHEDON.

<sup>1</sup> *Holiness as Understood by the Writers of the Bible*, p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> *Commentary*, Rev. vii, 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Possibilities of Grace*, p. 55.

Wesley himself. But surely this does not level the regenerate state to that of the unregenerate. In the one there is spiritual life; in the other, spiritual death. Further, the repression or subjugation may be so thorough in sanctification that the disorderly affections shall become orderly, or passively yield to the dominance of the higher spiritual life. The theory of repression certainly does not mean the freedom and full vigor of evil forces which constantly war against the soul. The notable formula of Dr. Chalmers, "the expulsive power of a new affection," is entirely consistent with the theory of repression; indeed, more consistent than with that of eradication. The new affection is not from the creation of a new power, but from the development of a capacity all the while latent in the mind; so the expulsion of a prior affection is not an eradication of the power which it manifests, but a suppression of its activity. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear."<sup>1</sup> Here is the same principle. But how does love cast out fear? Certainly not by an eradication of the capacity of fear, but by a suppression of its activity. This is the only mode in which love can cast out fear, or one affection expel another. Every possible affection must have its capacity in our nature. Hence, if in sanctification there is not only a suppression of all disordered affections, but also an eradication of all capacity for them, there can be no possible lapse from that state. But nothing could be more contrary than this result to the truly Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification. In a discussion of his own proposition, "sanctification is not the destruction of the passions," Dr. Lowrey seems to us in full accord with the view of repression, and against that of eradication.<sup>2</sup>

The reality of sanctification concerns us far more deeply than any question respecting the mode of the work within the soul. Sanctification, whether in part or in whole, is in the measure of the incoming and power of the Holy Spirit. It is entire when through his presence and power the evil tendencies are subdued and the dominance of the spiritual life is complete. We know nothing more of the mode of this inner work than we know of the mode of the Spirit in the work of regeneration. It may be in a more thorough subjugation of the sensuous and secular tendencies, or in a higher purification and invigoration of the moral and religious powers, or in a fuller presence and power of the Holy Spirit, or in all; but whether in one or another, or in all, the sanctification is entire when the spiritual life attains complete dominance. There is the same need

FORMULA OF  
CHALMERS.

CAPACITIES  
REMAIN.

THE CHIEF  
QUESTION.

MODE OF THE  
WORK UN-  
KNOWN.

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv, 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Possibilities of Grace*, pp. 219, 220.

of this special work in any incompleteness, whether from a lack of fullness in regeneration, or from deterioration after regeneration, or after entire sanctification.

3. *Concerning Sin in the Regenerate.*—The truth of a remnant of depravity in the regenerate is not the truth of all the teaching respecting it. That remnant must not be exaggerated in the interest of the doctrine of sanctification, nor to the detriment of the truth of regeneration. The latter point needs to be guarded as vitally important.

That this doctrine is exaggerated in some of its confessional statements we have no question. We may give two instances. In the articles of the Anglican Church, after a very strong characterization of inherited depravity, the doctrinal statement proceeds thus: "And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek *φρόνημα σαρκός*, . . . is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized; yet the apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin."<sup>1</sup> In the Westminster Confession, after an equally strong characterization of native depravity, these words follow: "This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in them that are regenerated; and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin."<sup>2</sup>

These we call mistaken views of regeneration; exaggerations of the depravity in the regenerate. Such is not the sinful state of a soul newly born of God into a gracious sonship. How shall we account for such exaggerations? Partly from the history of the doctrine. The doctrine itself was not original with either the Anglican Convocation or the Westminster Assembly, but was with each an inheritance from an early Christian age. The material fact is the close historical connection of the doctrine with that of baptismal regeneration. This connection may easily account for the very low view of regeneration. But the view is false to the truth of that great and gracious work; false to the Scriptures respecting it; false to the consciousness of the truly regenerate.

The superficiality of regeneration is no implication of its incompleteness. Nor should it be undervalued, as it sometimes is, through an unwise zeal for the doctrine of sanctification. The less the work of regeneration, the greater the work of sanctification; so the former is sometimes held

<sup>1</sup> Article ix.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. vi, v.

to be a very imperfect work, that the greater prominence may be given to the latter. But it is unwise, and a perversion of vital truth, to lower one fact in the work of salvation in order to exalt another. Regeneration is not a superficial work; nor is it, nor can it be, a small thing to be born of the Spirit.

Further, there is a mistaken use of certain instances of defective Christian life, particularly in the churches of Corinth, Galatia, and Asia, which leads to a false view of regeneration. The mistake arises in the treatment of such instances just as though they represented a true and normal regenerate life, whereas the Scriptures treat them as instances of very serious degeneration. This must be plain to any one who will study even a part of the appropriate texts.<sup>1</sup> Hence they cannot fairly represent the true regenerate life. If the aim was to prove that there may be serious degeneration without an utter forfeiture of the regenerate state, these instances would be in point; but they cannot be in point for the proof of the traditional doctrine of sin in the regenerate, because in such use it must be assumed that they fairly represent the normal regenerate life; and such an assumption is openly contrary to the Scriptures.

We cannot think Mr. Wesley's notable sermon "On Sin in Believers" entirely clear of this error.<sup>2</sup> It is the traditional doctrine which he therein maintains, and which he largely supports with such instances of degenerate Christian life as we before noted. There is in his discussion no dissent from that doctrine respecting the low state of the regenerate life which it assumes; no discrimination between the true regenerate life and that defective form of it represented by these instances of serious degeneration. Such is the doctrine which Mr. Wesley maintains in that sermon, and which he declares to have been the doctrine of the Church from the beginning. So broadly and invariably has it been held, that it must be viewed as truly catholic. The opposing doctrine of entire sanctification in regeneration was new with Zinzendorf, and wholly unknown before him. In emphasizing such facts Mr. Wesley further shows that it is the traditional doctrine of sin in the regenerate, even in its fullest strength, which he maintains in that notable sermon. Mr. Wesley was doctrinally educated in the Anglican articles, and in the ninth, which formulates this doctrine, just as he was in the others; and, while he came to far deeper and clearer views of the regenerate life than

MISTAKEN USE  
OF DEFECTIVE  
INSTANCES.

WESLEY ON  
SIN IN BE-  
LIEVERS.

THE TRADI-  
TIONAL DOC-  
TRINE.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. iii, 1-4; Gal. i, 6; iii, 1-3; v, 7; Rev. ii, 2-6, 13, 16; iii, 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Sermons*, xiii.

this article allows, yet is it the doctrinal basis of his sermon "On Sin in Believers."

We make no issue with Mr. Wesley in his sharp criticism of Zinzendorf respecting this new doctrine; though we would as soon believe and teach that regeneration is entire sanctification as to believe and teach that it is intrinsically a low spiritual state, a life half carnal, and that, simply as such, it never can be any better. We should be nearer the truly Wesleyan doctrine of regeneration in the former case than in the latter. The doctrine of Zinzendorf could easily be so perverted as to become a serious detriment to the spiritual life; but it should not be overlooked that his soteriology was strongly tinctured with antinomianism, and that this fact may account for much of the actual evil.

On the other hand, such views of the regenerate life as shall answer to the traditional doctrine of sin in believers must be most harmful. According to that doctrine there is unavoidably much sin in the regenerate life; and yet that such sin is not sin; that is, that it is not counted to the regenerate as sin. There is in such a doctrine no urgent call to an earnest, consecrated Christian life; no inspiration of hope for its attainment. Such views of the regenerate life are neither truly scriptural nor truly Wesleyan. Hence we must think that Mr. Wesley's sermon "On Sin in Believers" is not true either to the real truth of regeneration or to his own truthful views of that great and gracious work. All this must be plain to any one who will fairly compare that sermon with his sermon on "The Marks of the New Birth."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* is pervaded with views of regeneration in full accord with the latter sermon, but which are strongly out of accord with the special doctrine maintained in the former. The true regenerate life is not in the low plane of the traditional doctrine.

4. *The Second-Blessing View.*—The doctrinal view of the second blessing, as definitely held, consists of two parts, one of which has already been stated, but which may here be restated in connection with the other. The doctrine will thus be presented the more clearly.

Underlying the definite second-blessing view is the doctrine of a common incompleteness of the work of regeneration. Herein the soul is renewed, but not wholly; purified, but not thoroughly. Somewhat of depravity remains which wars against the new spiritual life; not strong enough to bring that life

<sup>1</sup> *Sermons*, xviii.

into bondage to itself, yet strong enough to impose a burden upon the work of its maintenance. Such is the first part. The doctrine in the second part is that the regenerate shall come to the consciousness of this incompleteness, and to a deep sense of the need of a fullness of the spiritual life; that these experiences shall be analogous to those which preceded the attainment of regeneration, and be just as deep and thorough. The fullness of sanctification shall be instantly attained on the condition of faith, just as justification is attained; and there shall be a new experience of a great and gracious change, and just as consciously such as the experience in regeneration.

That Mr. Wesley held and taught such views there can be no doubt; though we think it would be a wrong to him to say that he allowed no instances of entire sanctification except in this definite mode. We see no perplexity for faith in the possibility of such an instant subjective purification. Through the divine agency the soul may be as quickly cleansed as the leper, as quickly purified in whole as in part. We admit an instant partial sanctification in regeneration, and therefore may admit the possibility of an instant entire sanctification.

Such a view of sanctification does not mean that there need be no preparation for its attainment. The necessity of such a preparation is uniformly held, even by those who hold strongly the second-blessing view. The idea of such a preparation is inseparable from the process of experience through which, according to this view, the regenerate must pass in order to the attainment of entire sanctification.<sup>1</sup>

However, this process of preparation need not be chronologically long. No assumption of such a necessity could be true to the soteriology of the Scriptures. Let it be recalled that the question here is, not the maturity of the Christian life, but the purification of the nature. For the attainment of the former there must be growth, and growth requires time. But, while the subjective purification may be progressively wrought, it is not subject to the law of growth; and it is so thoroughly and solely the work of God that it may be quickly wrought. Neither is there any necessity that the mental process of preparation shall be chronologically a long one. Here, as in many other spheres, the mental movement may be very rapid. It is often so in conversion. In many instances the whole mental process has been crowded into an hour, or even less time. Even heathen have been saved, born of

<sup>1</sup> Peck: *The Central Idea of Christianity*, chap. v; Lowrey: *Possibilities of Grace*, pp. 137-158, 287-330.

the Spirit through faith in Christ, under the first sermon they ever heard. But there is as really a necessary process of preparation for regeneration as for entire sanctification; and such preparation need require no more time in the latter case than in the former.

That a subjective purification may be attained according to the definite second-blessing view does not limit the possibility to this single mode. There is no ground in Scripture for such a limitation. Indeed, the attainableness of sanctification according to this definitely wrought doctrine, as above stated, is a truth which lies in the soteriology of the Scriptures as a whole, and not in any definite teaching on the question. While they are full of the idea of entire sanctification, they are quite empty of any such teaching respecting the mode of its attainment. Hence any insistence upon such a mode as the only possible mode of sanctification must be without definite warrant of Scripture. Further, we think it a serious objection to this view, as thus rigidly held, that it cannot consistently allow any preaching of holiness, or any seeking after it, or any expectation of its attainment, except in this definite mode.

Mr. Wesley held strongly the view of an instant subjective sanctification; and we fully agree with him, not only in its possibility, but also in its frequent actuality; but his own illustration of his doctrine points to a possible attainment in a gradual mode. It is given in his answer to the question: "Is this death to sin, and renewal in love, gradual or instantaneous?" His answer is: "A man may be dying for some time, yet he does not, properly speaking, die till the instant the soul is separated from the body, and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner, he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin till sin is separated from the soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love."<sup>1</sup> The instant consummation here emphasized does not exclude the gradual approach to it; so that, according to this illustration, there may be a gradual dying unto sin until the death is complete; a gradual subjective purification until completeness is attained. Such a view is in the fullest accord with the soteriology of the Scriptures.

The privilege of entire sanctification is at once so thoroughly Scriptural and Wesleyan that from it there is among us only the rarest dissent. Yet not a few hesitate respecting the sharply defined second-blessing view. We do not share this hesitation, so far as that view represents a possible mode of

<sup>1</sup> *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, p. 80.



entire sanctification; though we object to any insistence that such is the only possible mode. Right here is the occasion of OCCASION OF DIFFERENCES. unfortunate differences among us. However, much of the evil consequence might easily be avoided; much of it would be avoided through a spirit of mutual forbearance. Let those who hold rigidly the second-blessing view preach sanctification in their own way, but let them be tolerant of such as preach it in a manner somewhat different; and let such as hesitate respecting that special view be tolerant of those for whom it possesses great interest. All ministers who believe in the privilege of a full salvation can preach it in good faith. Indeed, they are not at liberty to omit this preaching.

Who shall say that the only permissible or profitable preaching of sanctification is that which prescribes an exact mode THE REAL INTEREST. of its attainment? The doctrine itself, and not any rigid form into which we may cast it, is the real interest; the privilege itself, the great privilege; the actual attainment, the highest aim. And if with one consent, even if without regard to definite modes, we should earnestly preach a full salvation; preach it as a common privilege and duty; preach it as the true aim of every Christian life, surely there would be large gain in a wider spiritual edification, while many would enter into "the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

### III. THE LIFE IN HOLINESS.

In the earlier part of this discussion we pointed out the distinction between the two questions respecting the sanctification of the nature and the holiness of the life. Having TREATMENT BY LEADING AUTHORS. sufficiently treated the former, we now take up the latter. This question we desire, first of all, to present in the words of some of its leading expositors. However, there is one difficulty in such presentation; it arises from a lack of proper discrimination between the two spheres of sanctification which we before pointed out. Mostly, the subject is treated simply as one, and without any real distinction, certainly without any formal distinction, between the sanctification of the nature and the holiness of the life. This is specially true of Mr. Wesley's treatment. While both questions appear in his discussions, yet it is without any such distinction of the two as we think necessary to the clearer treatment of the subject. Such is the case in the passages which we shall directly cite from him; yet, with proper discrimination on our own part, the fact need not obscure his portraiture of the life in Christian holiness.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xv, 29.

1. *Portraiture of the Life.*—We first present this portraiture as drawn by Mr. Wesley himself. In the first citation we observe the order of question and answer in which he wrote.

WESLEY.

“Q. What is Christian perfection?”

“A. The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength.

DEFINITIVE STATEMENT.

This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions are governed by pure love.

“Q. Do you affirm that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake?”

“A. I continually affirm quite the contrary, and always have done so.

“Q. But how can every thought, word, and work be governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistake?”

“A. I see no contradiction here: ‘A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake.’ Indeed, I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes till this mortal puts on immortality. . . .

“But we may carry this thought farther yet. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice. For instance: Mr. De Renty’s mistake touching the nature of mortification, arising from prejudice of education, occasioned that practical mistake, his wearing an iron girdle. And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet where every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not properly a sin. However, it cannot bear the rigor of God’s justice, but needs the atoning blood.

“Q. What was the judgment of all our brethren who met at Bristol, in August, 1758, on this head?”

“A. It was expressed in these words: 1. Every man may mistake as long as he lives. 2. A mistake in opinion may occasion a mistake in practice. 3. Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore, 4. Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. 5. It follows that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, ‘Forgive us our trespasses.’

“This easily accounts for what might otherwise seem to be utterly unaccountable, namely, that those who are not offended when we speak of the highest degree of love, yet will not hear of living without sin. The reason is, they know all men

MISTAKES NOT SIN.

are liable to mistake, and that in practice as well as in judgment. But they do not know, or do not observe, that this is not sin, if love is the sole principle of action.

“*Q.* But still, if they live without sin, does not this exclude the necessity of a Mediator? At least, is it not plain that they stand no longer in need of Christ in his priestly office?”

“*A.* Far from it. None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from, but in and with himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatsoever state of grace they are: ‘As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me: without (or separate from) me ye can do nothing.’

“In every state we need Christ in the following respects: 1. Whatever grace we receive it is a free gift from him. 2. We receive it as his purchase, merely in consideration of the price he paid. 3. We have this grace, not only from Christ, but in him. For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but, as was said before, like that of a branch which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but, severed from it, is dried up and withered. 4. All our blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, depend on his intercession for us, which is one branch of his priestly office, whereof therefore we have always equal need. 5. The best of men still need Christ in his priestly office to atone for their omissions, their shortcomings (as some not improperly speak), their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds; for these are all deviations from the perfect law, and consequently need an atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins we apprehend may appear from the words of St. Paul: ‘He that loveth hath fulfilled the law; for love is the fulfilling of the law.’<sup>1</sup> Now, mistakes, and whatever infirmities necessarily flow from the corruptible state of the body, are no way contrary to love; nor, therefore, in the Scripture sense, sin.

“To explain myself a little further on this head: 1. Not only sin, properly so called (that is, a voluntary transgression of a known law), but sin, improperly so called (that is, an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown), needs the atoning blood. 2. I believe there is no such perfection in this life as excludes those involuntary transgressions, which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. 3. There-

EVER A NEED  
OF CHRIST.

ONLY SOURCE  
OF GRACE.

THE BEST NEED  
CHRIST.

RESPECTING  
SINLESS PER-  
FECTION.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xiii, 10.

fore *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself. 4. I believe a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. 5. Such transgressions you may call sin, if you please: I do not, for the reasons above mentioned.”<sup>1</sup>

Such is the Christian perfection which Mr. Wesley maintained. Surely he cannot be fairly accused of extravagance. His doctrine means no absolute perfection; no such perfection as might be possible in a purely spiritual being; no such perfection even as might have been possible to un-fallen man. Many forms of infirmity are clearly recognized as inseparable from our present life, whatever our spiritual attainment. Indeed, with his own qualifications, the moderation of his doctrine is all that the Scriptures will allow. In another view, his doctrine

is carefully guarded against harmful perversions, the possibility of which he clearly foresaw. No possible attainment in grace can for a moment free us from the need of Christ, or lift us above the propriety of praying, “Forgive us our trespasses.” Finally, love is emphasized as the central reality of Christian perfection. This is a view which Mr. Wesley has often presented, and not without the fullest warrant of Scripture. It is not meant, either in the Scriptures or in his doctrine, that love is the only Christian duty, but, rather, that with the supremacy of love the whole life must be in harmony with the will of God. It is in this sense that “love is the fulfilling of the law.”<sup>2</sup>

In 1767 Mr. Wesley wrote thus: “Some thoughts occurred to my mind this morning concerning Christian perfection, and the manner and time of receiving it, which I believe may be useful to set down.

“1. By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbor, ruling our tempers, words, and actions. . . .

“2. As to the manner. I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently in an instant. But I believe a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant.

“3. As to the time. I believe this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body. But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before. I believe it is usually many years after justification; but that it may be within five years or five months after it, I know no conclusive argument to the contrary.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wesley: *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, pp. 62-67.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xiii, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Works, vol. vi, pp. 531, 532.

On this great question we place Mr. Fletcher next to Mr. Wesley. In two brief paragraphs, properly regarded as classical, he gives us a picture of Christian perfection, or of the life in holiness:

FLETCHER.

“ We call Christian perfection the maturity of grace and holiness, which established, adult believers attain to under the Christian dispensation; and by this means we distinguish that maturity of grace, both from the ripeness of grace which belongs to the dispensation of the Jews below us, and from the ripeness of glory which belongs to departed saints above us. Hence it appears that, by Christian perfection, we mean nothing but the cluster and maturity of the graces which compose the Christian character in the Church militant.

ANALYTIC  
VIEW.

“ In other words, Christian perfection is a spiritual constellation made up of these gracious stars: perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity for our visible enemies, as well as for our earthly relations; and, above all, perfect love for our invisible God, through the explicit knowledge of our Mediator Jesus Christ. And as this last star is always accompanied by all the others, as Jupiter is by his satellites, we frequently use, as St. John, the phrase ‘ perfect love,’ instead of the word ‘ perfection;’ understanding by it the pure love of God, shed abroad in the heart of established believers by the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly given them under the fullness of the Christian dispensation.”<sup>1</sup>

PERFECTION OF  
GRACES.

The life in Christian holiness, as here portrayed, is the same as in the citations from Mr. Wesley. The only observable difference is in respect to the element of time in the attainment of perfection or maturity. While Mr. Fletcher does not formally treat this question, yet in the use of the phrase “ established, adult believers,” in the characterization of such as attain perfection, there is a clear recognition of the element of time in that attainment. This we think the true view. While there may be an instant subjective purification, only with time can there be a perfection or maturity of the Christian graces. “ Mr. Fletcher is also very careful to introduce the word ‘ established ’ before believer, and in one place inserts the word ‘ adult ’ as a qualifier in the same connection. This is intended to guard against the notion that inexperienced, impulsive Christian faith, however vigorous for the time, is capable of producing at once the ripened fruit of the Spirit. It is not the warmth of the

THE ELEMENT  
OF TIME.COMMENT OF  
MERRILL.

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Perfection*, pp. 9, 10.

heart, but its steadiness, its depth, its breadth of love, and its tested resistance to the powers of evil, that distinguishes the 'established' believer; as it is through all the experiences of impulse and of emotion and of temptation incident to the Christian life that the settled and unmovable faith is acquired, which may be truthfully described as matured and ripened. Christian perfection is, therefore, not a childhood attainment. It belongs to those who have grown upon the sincere milk of the word till they are able to digest the strong meat of the Gospel, and whose spiritual senses are exercised to discern good and evil. It belongs to adult believers, to those who have become 'rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, abounding therein with thanksgiving.'"<sup>1</sup>

We add another passage, one with little detail, but intensely forceful in the presentation of the central realities of a life in Christian holiness: "By holiness I mean that state of the soul in which all its alienation from God and all its aversion to a holy life are removed. In this state sin is odious. The more holy any soul, any being is, the more odious sin becomes. To a good man sin is odious; to a holy man it is more odious; to an angel it is far more so still; but to God sin must be, to us, inconceivably odious. And therefore it is said that the heavens are not clean in his sight, and that he charged his angels with folly—so insignificant is their holiness when contrasted with the holiness of God. Holiness admits of an infinite number of degrees; and there is set before us an eternal progression in holiness. But that degree of it, or that state of the soul in which temptations to sin leave there no damaging moral influence, no tarnish of sin, no pain in the conscience, no corruption of the will, no obscurity or perversion of the spiritual vision—that state in which the all-efficacious blood of Jesus has washed away all the stains of sin, and in which the Holy Spirit constantly presides, rules, and reigns without a rival—is what we call sanctification."<sup>2</sup>

Further appropriate citations could do little more than repeat what has already been well stated, and therefore may be omitted. We add a few words in the form of a definitive statement: With a true and full self-consecration to God; with a trustful resting of the soul in Christ; with a single purpose and earnest endeavor to do his will; with a gracious power through the Spirit against evil and unto a good life; most of all, with the supremacy of love in the soul, the life is in Christian holiness. Such it may be from the hour of the subjective purification, or the thorough

<sup>1</sup> Merrill: *Aspects of Christian Experience*, pp. 235, 236.

<sup>2</sup> McCabe: *Light on the Pathway of Holiness*, pp. 68-70.

invigoration of the moral and religious powers, and while the maturity of the Christian graces is yet wanting. If holiness of life be not possible prior to such maturity, then it must be impossible through all the time necessary to that attainment. In this case holiness of life never can be reached except through a process of growth; and therefore, for a greater or less time, the life in regeneration must be a sinful life. But such is not the Wesleyan doctrine. Mr. Wesley himself maintained the possibility of a holy life in the regenerate state, and from the hour of regeneration. Surely, then, it must be possible from the hour of the subjective sanctification.

HOLINESS BEFORE MATURITY.

2. *Grades in Graces.*—The life in holiness does not mean an exact equality in the graces of all who so live. Here the element of time must cause wide differences. As these graces acquire strength through trial and reach maturity through a process of growth, so they should be stronger and maturer in those long in the life of holiness than in those who have but recently attained it. There are other laws of difference, particularly in the matter of capacity and temperament. The religious capacity is no more equal in all men than the intellectual capacity. Such being the case, there can be no one grade for all who attain unto a life in holiness. “The point to be maintained is a pure heart, an unsinning life, and a loving service progressively commensurate with our ever-increasing capacity and light. This rule will show a disparity among entirely sanctified persons. Capacity and circumstances will make the difference. This fact should caution us not to pronounce all persons unsanctified who do not measure up to the highest standard in our estimation in sanctity of life and propriety of behavior.”<sup>1</sup>

LAW OF TIME.

TEMPERAMENT AND CAPACITY.

The Christian graces of the same person must differ in perfection or strength, whatever the grade of his attainment in holiness. One may excel in one grace; another in another; but none in all. Even in sacred history different persons are examples of pre-eminence in different graces. Accordingly, the faith of Abraham, the patience of Job, the meekness of Moses, the love of John, and the heroism of Paul are familiar ideas. Peculiarities of temperament not only account for such facts, but make them inevitable. It is not in the nature of things, nor according to the working of divine grace, that any one should excel in the entire circle of Christian graces.

NONE EXCEL IN ALL GRACES.

3. *Law of Perfection in Graces.*—In an earlier part of this discussion it was shown that a subjective sanctification is the neces-

<sup>1</sup> Lowrey: *Possibilities of Grace*, p. 227.

sary ground of the Christian graces, in all stages of their development; but it was also pointed out that the perfection or maturity of these graces is not an instant, not even a direct product of such sanctification. They must have time for growth; must be tested in the fields of duty and trial; must be strengthened and perfected through the proper exercise. In this manner not a few whose record is in sacred history gained the strength and fullness of their religious character. Such character could not have been gained in any other mode. A glance at the lives of the leading biblical characters will readily discover the truth of these statements. There are many such instances in Christian history. The men of distinction in Christian character and service have ever reached the perfection of their graces through the fulfillment of trying duty. No endowment of grace ever supersedes this law of perfection. There is a wisdom, a strength, a patience, a courage, a zeal, a self-consecration in the spirit of self-sacrifice which can be won only on the field of duty and trial. Take the instance of St. Paul: with the same reciprocity of grace, yet without his many trying experiences, he never could have attained to such a degree of perfection in so many Christian graces. The law thus illustrated by so many notable instances is applicable to every Christian life.

It is not essential to such a life, that it shall be without variations of experience; that no shadow shall fall upon its sunshine, nor sense of sorrow mingle with its joy; that there shall be no moments of temptation or trial, hesitation or doubt. It is true that uniformity of experience is to be regarded as specially characteristic of the life in holiness; but such variations as we have indicated are, as occasional facts, entirely consistent with the truest constancy. In all and through all there may be the unmovable steadfastness of faith and the fullness of love. If it be not so, there is for us no present attainment of a full salvation; none, indeed, in the present life. Whatever the blessedness of this state, it is not the heavenly state. With the fullness of salvation we are still in the body and in the common relations of life. Many infirmities and trials are inseparable from this bodily state; many burdens and sorrows, unavoidable in these relations. The imagination, especially when warmed by the mystical temper, may picture a state of indifference to outward things; a state in which the soul is so lost in God as to be free from all anxiety and care, and even without wish of ease from pain; a state in which sickness and death are indifferent to the calm repose, and even the peril of souls awakens no solicitude; but such a reverie is

A NECESSARY  
LAW.

VARIATIONS OF  
EXPERIENCE.

DELUSIVE REVERIES.



far more replete with hallucination than with the truth and reality of sanctification. Certainly it is neither Paul-like nor Christ-like.

The doctrine of sanctification must not be so interpreted as to be made a doctrine of despair to all Christians who have not consciously attained to such an experience, particularly in the definite manner of the second-blessing theory. No such interpretation can be true, because it must deny the salvation of the truly regenerate. The truly regenerate are saved, and in the maintenance of a truly regenerate life must be finally saved. If there is any clear truth of soteriology in the Scriptures this truth is there. Through faith in Christ they have received the double blessing of justification and regeneration. By the one they are freed from the guilt of sin, and by the other they are born into the kingdom of God and become his children.<sup>1</sup> The texts given by reference are replete with the truths just stated, as are many others which might easily be added. Indeed, such is the pervasive sense of the Scriptures. We are redeemed by Christ that we might become the sons of God.<sup>2</sup> That sonship is surely attained through regeneration. "And if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."<sup>3</sup> Wesley taught this doctrine, and so did Fletcher and Watson; and so has every truly Wesleyan representative who has ever written upon the subject.

SALVATION IN  
REGENERATION.

A TRUTH OF  
SCRIPTURE.

Is the maintenance of a life in the fullness of sanctification essential to final salvation? Yes, if we are under a dispensation of law; no, if we are under a dispensation of grace. But we are under grace, and not under the law. Such is the doctrine of St. Paul: "For ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."<sup>4</sup> Our privilege and duty point in the same direction, and bid us strive after all the gracious attainment for which we are apprehended by Christ Jesus.<sup>5</sup> Yet with the sense of many shortcomings we may, and we must still cling to Christ and hope in him. So must we encourage others to do. Never may we break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. The Master never does.<sup>6</sup>

UNDER GRACE.

4. *The Assurance of Sanctification.*—The assurance of sanctification is a part of the doctrine, as it is usually maintained. There may be some differences of view respecting the source or sources of assurance, while there is agreement respecting

THE MENTAL  
STATE.

<sup>1</sup> John i, 12, 13; iii, 36; Rom. v, 1, 2; viii, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. iv, 4, 5; 1 John iii, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iv, 7; Rom. viii, 17.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. vi, 14, 15.

<sup>5</sup> Phil. iii, 12.

<sup>6</sup> Isa. xlii, 3; Matt. xii, 20.

the fact itself. Such a form of assurance is a mental state respecting some fact or truth, and is well known in consciousness. As a mental state it is much the same, however greatly the facts or truths which it respects may differ. But, while the mental state is thus one, it may arise from different sources. As in the present question the matter of assurance is the fullness of salvation, so the assurance itself can arise only from such facts or agencies as shall verify to the mind the reality of such a gracious attainment.

Two sources of such assurance are usually claimed: the witness of the Holy Spirit; and the witness of our own Spirit. Thus the witnesses are held to be the same in this case as in the assurance of sonship. There is no apparent reason for any question respecting the latter witness, but there may be differences of view respecting the former.

There is a direct witness of the Spirit to our sonship, as was shown in our doctrine of assurance. In that case the Scriptures are explicit; but they are not explicit respecting such a witness to the fullness of salvation. It is not claimed that they are; hence that there is such a witness can be maintained only as an inference. This is the manner in which it is maintained: "What I would now urge is, that if a sensible evidence of adoption may be expected, that the same kind of evidence may be expected, with increased luster, to accompany the different stages of our progress in holiness. If God vouchsafe to the merely justified an evidence of gracious acceptance, would he be likely to withhold from those whose hearts are entirely consecrated to him an evidence that the offering is accepted? Indeed, the doctrines of the evidence of adoption, and of entire sanctification in this life, being proved, it seems a matter of course that the inward testimony of the Spirit to the truth of the latter, whenever it takes place, would be afforded."<sup>1</sup>

So far as this argument relates to the assurance of sanctification through the witness of the Spirit, it has little weight. Here is still the significant fact that, while the Scriptures are explicit respecting a direct witness of the Spirit to adoption or sonship, they are quite silent respecting such a witness to entire sanctification. The prominence given to this blessing must not be overlooked. In the view of not a few it is quite equal to regeneration, whereby we become the children of God; indeed, in the view of some, even greater. Such is the assumption of the argument above cited; and that superiority is made the ground of an inference in favor of a direct witness of the Spirit to the attain-

<sup>1</sup> George Peck: *Christian Perfection*, pp. 440, 441.

ment of sanctification. The argument is really this: if there is a direct witness of the Spirit to our regeneration and sonship, there must be such a witness to the greater blessing of an entire sanctification. But if there be such a witness of the Spirit, and for the reason just given, why the silence of Scripture respecting it? Why is his witness an explicit truth of Scripture in the one case and in the other left to inference?

Nor can such a witness of the Spirit be affirmed by the consciousness of the wholly sanctified. In order to any such affirmation, this testimony must be so communicated to their intelligence that they shall know it to be given directly by the Spirit. Such, however, is not the manner of the Spirit in his witness to our sonship. Therein his testimony is given simply in the mode of an impression in our consciousness; an impression in the form of an assurance that we are the children of God; and we are directly cognizant only of that impression, not of the agency of the Spirit whereby it is produced. That there is such a witness of the Spirit we know only through the Scriptures. Such must be the witness of the Spirit to the state of entire sanctification, if there be any such a witness. The advocates of the doctrine assume this in making the direct witness of the Spirit to our sonship the chief ground from which they infer such a witness to our sanctification. But, being such, the consciousness of the sanctified cannot be cognizant of the agency of the Spirit therein, and therefore cannot verify the fact of such a witness. On the explicit ground of Scripture we know that there is a direct witness of the Spirit to our sonship; but there is no such ground on which we may know the fact of such a witness to our sanctification. Still there may be such a witness. We have neither denied it nor attempted to disprove it. We have shown that there is no sufficient ground for its confident assertion. It is better, therefore, that such assertion be not made.

We do not question the fact of an assurance of entire sanctification. There may be a direct witness of the Holy Spirit to such a gracious attainment; but without such a witness the assurance is still possible. The inner work of salvation is such that it clearly reveals itself in the consciousness of its subjects. Regeneration so reveals itself. It brings a heavenly light and life into the soul; it brings a heavenly peace and love and joy. The soul is deeply conscious of these new experiences, and finds in them the assurance of salvation and acceptance in the loving favor of God. It is conscious of renewed blessings; of blessings often repeated; of some as very deep and precious. So the full salvation

NO APPEAL TO  
CONSCIOUS-  
NESS.

TRUTH OF THE  
ASSURANCE.

may reveal its fullness in the consciousness of the happy recipient. The fullness of peace and purity, rest and love, may thus be known; but as the facts of experience through which our own spirit witnesses to our sonship must ever be tested and approved by the Scriptures, so must the experiences through which it witnesses to a full salvation be tested and approved.

5. *Sanctification a Common Privilege.*—There is a divine side to this question as well as a human side. If we look only at the human we shall more than doubt the possibility of a full salvation in the present life. In this single view we shall see nothing but the weakness and sinfulness of man. But if we look also on the divine side we shall see the infinite efficiencies which center in the economy of redemption; efficiencies which work together for our salvation from sin. Let us say, then, that man is corrupt and sinful, and in himself not only weak, but utterly helpless; but against all this let us affirm the truth that on the divine side there is a mighty Saviour, an all-cleansing blood, and a divine Purifier. In these central truths of our soteriology lies the possibility of a present full salvation. If such a salvation meant a deliverance from the manifold infirmities which are inseparable from the present life, then, indeed, would it be impossible so long as we live; but such infirmities are not sins, and therefore are not inconsistent with a state of full salvation.

Many texts mean the privilege of a life in holiness, a very few of which may here be cited. They so mean because they cannot be properly interpreted without the truth of such a privilege. “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”<sup>1</sup> The perfection and holiness here required must be possible in this life. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”<sup>2</sup> The meaning is not that such love is literally the fulfillment of every duty, but, rather, that when in its fullness it is the ruling power of the life. With the possibility and the actuality of such love, the fulfillment of all the other duties must be possible. The life would thus be in holiness. The divine commandment of such love means its possibility. “And the very

APPROPRIATE  
TEXTS.

BE PERFECT.

BE HOLY.

FULLNESS OF  
LOVE.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v, 48; 1 Pet. i, 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxii, 37-40.

God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>1</sup> This prayer means the possibility of the blessings for which the supplication is made. The blessings have respect to both the nature and the life. In the first petition, “sanctify you wholly,” the life may be included, but the nature cannot be omitted; and the words of the petition express their own meaning respecting its entire sanctification. The second petition relates to the life, and has the same meaning of entirety: that “your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” A life in which this prayer is fulfilled must be a life in holiness. “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”<sup>2</sup> The saints in heaven were thus cleansed before their entrance into that holy place: “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”<sup>3</sup> The prior text clearly means a cleansing in the present life; for it is while we are walking in the light, and on that condition, that it is promised. Now there can be no question about the completeness of the cleansing of the saints in heaven. The words, “washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,” can mean nothing less. But the words, “the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,” are not less full of the idea of completeness. There is still a great difference between the saints in heaven and the saints on earth, in that the former are freed from the manifold infirmities to which the latter are still subject; but infirmities are not sins, and, while they remain, the completeness of the cleansing is still the meaning of the words, “the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

The great prayer of St. Paul for the Christians of Ephesus is replete with the ideas of a full salvation in the present life. That it is a prayer involves no uncertainty of the privileges of gracious attainment which its petitions properly mean. In no doctrinal utterances was St. Paul ever more deeply inspired than in this prayer. Hence its petitions have the same doctrinal meaning respecting the privileges of gracious attainment that they could have if cast in the most definite forms of doctrinal expression. Further, these petitions mean for all Christians the same fullness of spiritual blessings which they meant for the Christians of Ephesus,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. v, 23.<sup>2</sup> 1 John i, 7.<sup>3</sup> Rev. vii, 14.

for whom they were directly offered. With these preparatory statements, the prayer shall express its own deep meaning to such as devoutly meditate upon its petitions: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."<sup>1</sup>

Wesley: *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*; Fletcher: *Christian Perfection*; George Peck: *Scripture Doctrine of Christian Perfection*; Bangs: *Letters on Sanctification*; Foster: *Christian Purity*; Jesse T. Peck: *The Central Idea of Christianity*; Mahan: *Christian Perfection*; Boardman: *The Higher Christian Life*; Steel: *Love Enthroned*; Wood: *Perfect Love*; Merrill: *Aspects of Christian Experience*, chaps. xiii-xv; Beet: *Holiness as Understood by the Writers of the Bible*; Lowrey: *Possibilities of Grace*; Crane: *Holiness the Birthright of All God's Children*; Franklin: *Review of Wesleyan Perfection*; Boland: *Problem of Methodism*.

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<sup>1</sup> Eph. iii, 14-21.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE CHURCH.

## I. THE CHURCH AND MEANS OF GRACE.

As the Church is divinely constituted for the work of evangelization and the spiritual edification of believers, and also contains the divinely instituted means for the attainment of these ends, it may properly be treated in connection with soteriology.

1. *Idea of the Church.*—The word church, as we find it in the New Testament, is mostly the rendering of the Greek word *ἐκκλησία*.<sup>1</sup> This word is composed of *ἐκ*, from or out of, and *καλεῖν*, to summon or call, with the idea of a convocation for the consideration or transaction of some public business. The primary idea is that of an orderly assembly, though the term is not withheld from a thoroughly disorderly one. Of this PRIMARY IDEA. we have an instance in the following record: “Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly—*ἐκκλησία*—was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.”<sup>2</sup> But the primary idea of an orderly assembly, lawfully convened for public business, fully appears in the words of advice which the town clerk addressed to this disorderly body: “But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly”<sup>3</sup>—*ἐν τῇ ἐννόμῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ*.

In like manner, Christians are called into churchly association. The idea of a divine call of believers in Christ often CHRISTIAN IDEA. occurs in the New Testament. They are called unto a heavenly hope and a glorious inheritance;<sup>4</sup> called into a brotherly fellowship, in the unity of the Spirit;<sup>5</sup> called of God unto his kingdom and glory;<sup>6</sup> called with a holy calling, according to the divine purpose of grace in Christ Jesus.<sup>7</sup> In other forms of expression there is present the same idea of a divine call: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”<sup>8</sup> While the privileges and duties of all who are thus called of God are made

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii, 1; xi, 26; 1 Cor. i, 2; xi, 18, 22; 2 Cor. i, 1; Gal. i, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xix, 32.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xix, 39.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. i, 18.

<sup>5</sup> Eph. iv, 1–4.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Thess. ii, 12.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Tim. i, 9.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Pet. ii, 9.

prominent in these texts, the idea of their organic association is ever present. In that association which springs from their heavenly calling they compose a Christian Church. There are, however, specially observable differences between a Church in the primary sense of the term and a Church in this Christian sense. In the former case the call is merely human, and the convocation for purely secular purposes; while in the latter the call is divine and the purposes truly spiritual.

Such is the deeper Christian idea of the term church, whether in its purely local application or as comprehensive of the whole body of believers. There are in the New Testament many instances of the former application. Thus we read of the church at Jerusalem;<sup>1</sup> of the church in the house of Priscilla and Aquila;<sup>2</sup> of the church in the house of Philemon.<sup>3</sup> We also read of the churches of Galatia and of Asia.<sup>4</sup> In these instances the plural term means local churches, just as the singular term in the prior instances. But in other uses it is clearly comprehensive of the whole body of Christian believers. Such is the fact in the words of our Lord: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."<sup>5</sup> The Church to which Christ is made head over all things; the Church by which the manifold wisdom of God is made known unto principalities and powers in heavenly places; the Church in which God is glorified throughout all ages, is the Church which comprises all true believers in Christ.<sup>6</sup> The term is now in common use with like distinctions of meaning. We use it in the local sense when we speak of an individual church, as, for instance, of Trinity, or Calvary, or St. Paul's; but when we speak simply of the Church, or the Church of Christ, we use it in its most comprehensive sense.

There is a present use of the term for which there was no occasion in apostolic times—a use in its denominational applications. We now speak of the denominations severally as Churches; as, for instance, the Presbyterian, the Protestant Episcopal, or the Methodist Episcopal Church. Any Christian communion rightfully organized as a Church is entitled to such designation. The rightful organization of our leading evangelical Churches cannot be questioned, except on thoroughly prelatial ground—such ground as has no place in the New Testament. If the principles of ecclesiastical polity observable therein justify the denominational existence of the Protestant Episcopal Church,

DENOMINA-  
TIONAL  
CHURCHES.

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xvi, 3-5.

<sup>3</sup> Philem. 2.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xvi, 1, 19.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xvi, 18.

<sup>6</sup> Eph. i, 22; iii, 10, 21.



they must equally justify such existence of the Presbyterian and the Methodist Episcopal Churches.

No one denomination is the Church in its comprehensive sense. No one is in this sense the visible Church, which comprises all who are in Christian communion; no one is the invisible Church, which comprises all who are truly Christian. We accept the Apostles' Creed, and therein declare our faith "in the holy catholic Church;" but this is the general or invisible Church in its most comprehensive sense. Hence we still need a more specific idea of the Church than any which has yet appeared. Such an idea we may find in some of the confessional definitions. Perhaps the one given in our own Articles of Religion is as satisfactory as any other: "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."<sup>1</sup> This is properly the definition of a local church, but, so far as the more vital facts are concerned, may be accepted as the definition of a denominational Church, however numerous the local churches which it comprises. The chief question in this definition, and the one most in dispute, concerns the due administration of the sacraments, but it must be passed, at least for the present.

The origin or historical founding of the Church is a question respecting which there are some differences of opinion. Christ spoke of his kingdom or Church as yet future, though close at hand: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, when he sent forth the chosen twelve he thus commanded them: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." In the deeper ideas the kingdom of heaven, as here designated, is not other than the Church. He also speaks of his Church as yet future: "Upon this rock I will build my church."<sup>3</sup> It is in the meaning of these words that his Church was not yet builded; really, not yet founded. It is also in their meaning that Christ is himself the founder and builder of his Church. There is a deep sense in which this is true. Yet it seems equally true that Christ did not in any formal manner organize a Church. On a superficial view these facts may seem discordant, but a deeper insight discovers their complete harmony.

The practical forces of Christianity, to which all true Christians are subject, must unite them in social compact. Such a force is the

<sup>1</sup> Article xiii.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iv, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xvi, 18.

personal influence of Christ ; an influence not only over those with whom he was personally associated, but over all who love him. We see its power over the early disciples of Christ ; it not only united them closely with himself, but drew them into living sympathy and loving fellowship with each other. Christianity was to them a new spiritual life, which they shared in common ; and this life was a bond of union. By such forces were they drawn together in the closest fellowship ;<sup>1</sup> and their organic union in the constitution of a church was the inevitable result.<sup>2</sup>

2. *Duty of Church Membership.*—As the divinely instituted means of grace are mostly within the Church, membership therein is necessary to their full enjoyment.

The duty of church membership often appears in the New Testament. It is present in the emphasis which is placed upon the public confession of Christ : “ Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.”<sup>3</sup> Such a confession of Christ carries with it the idea of membership in his Church. Such too is the meaning of the duty of an unyielding fidelity to him, even when subject to the severest persecutions.<sup>4</sup> There could be no liability to such persecution, nor call to such fidelity, without the public confession ; nor such confession without the membership. The same ideas appear in the assurance of the divine succor of the persecuted, and the promise of a crown of life as the reward of their fidelity.

The duty of church membership appears in another view. The evangelization of the world is clearly the mission of Christianity. But the fulfillment of this mission requires the Church, because the instrumental agencies for its accomplishment are not else possible. Hence membership therein is plainly a common Christian duty ; for if one might omit or refuse it, so might another, and so might all. In this case there could be no Church, nor any of the instrumental agencies through which the work of evangelization is prosecuted. But without such means, and without the Church which must furnish them, Christianity could have no future ; nor could it ever have attained a place in history. What if Peter and Paul, and the fathers and martyrs, and the great reformers, and the many efficient heralds of the Gospel had assumed the position of privacy in their Christian life, and refused all organic union and co-operation ? In that case their evan-

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii, 41–47.

<sup>2</sup> Van Oosterzee, *Christian Dogmatics*, vol. ii, pp. 700, 701

<sup>3</sup> Matt. x, 32, 33.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. ii, 10.

gelistic work never could have been wrought, and Christianity, instead of becoming the ruling power of the world and the salvation of mankind, would have perished in its inception.

3. *Means of Grace.*—We may properly reckon as means of grace all spiritual helps arising from our union with the Church. In this view they might be presented with many distinctions; but no advantage could arise from such detail in their presentation.

The churchly association of living Christians is one of mutual affection and sympathy. They watch over each other in love. The more stable and mature are often a blessing to the less experienced. Many a time the kindly word of one saves or recalls another from an erring step. This is in the fulfillment of a Christian duty: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."<sup>1</sup> In living churches there are officers whose special duty it is to render this service. A watchful but kindly oversight is the duty of the pastor, and a duty which the members must respect: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."<sup>2</sup> Such a service is of inestimable value to many.

Christian fellowship is a privilege of church membership, and one of large spiritual profit. We are constituted for society, and are accordingly endowed with social affections. Life would be utterly dreary without its social element. But in no sphere is there deeper need of this element than in the religious. The Christian life would be lonely and lacking in spiritual vigor without the fellowship of kindred minds. On the other hand, the communion of souls alive in Christ is a fruition of grace. Here is a means of much spiritual profit.

The word of God is a means of grace. It is such as read and studied privately, and also as heard in the faithful preaching of its truths. As in the treatment of regeneration we had occasion to show that there was no immediate regenerating power in the truth, so now it should be observed that it possesses no immediate power of conferring spiritual blessings. This, however, does not affect the reality of its value as a means of grace. Its value lies in the fact that, whether read and studied privately or duly heard as faithfully preached, it brings the mind into communion with its living realities, which summon to

<sup>1</sup> Gal. vi, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xiii, 17.

fidelity in duty and call forth aspirations for the blessings of grace now and the blessedness of heaven hereafter.

Among all the divinely instituted means for the accomplishment of the mission of Christianity the chief place is assigned to the preaching of the Gospel. Such is the meaning of the great commission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."<sup>1</sup> While the universal propagation of Christianity is thus required, the preaching of the Gospel is the divinely prescribed means for its accomplishment. The apostles wrought accordingly in the fulfillment of the duty assigned them; and so wrought their colaborers. Such too has been the method of all their faithful successors in the ministry. And such must be the method even to the end; must be, because it is God's way of bringing souls to Christ and building them up in the Christian life. These views have many illustrations in the history of the Church. Every age of evangelistic power and progress bears witness to the faithful preaching of the Gospel; every truly spiritual reformation has been led by such preaching; every living Church of to-day has a living ministry. The preaching of the Gospel must not lose its place as a means of grace; therefore it must not lose its efficiency; for without the latter it cannot retain the former. Ministers must so preach the Gospel that it shall accomplish the part assigned it in the divine plan. They have no more sacred duty, no profounder responsibility.

Prayer is a means of grace of very large value. It affords the privilege of close communion with God, especially when the soul is alone with him in its supplications. In this communion there often arises a deep sense of our need, of our helplessness and unworthiness; but there comes with it an assurance of the divine fullness and love, which enlarges our petitions and inspires the confidence of a gracious answer from our heavenly Father. There is spiritual benefit simply in such close communion with God; but there is a larger benefit in the blessings which he grants us in answer to our prayers. The Scriptures are replete with the promises of such blessings; replete with instances of their fulfillment.

Some requisites are so obviously necessary to the genuineness and power of prayer that they need only to be named. Prayer requires sincerity. The purpose of amendment and a good life must ever be breathed into our supplication for the forgiveness of past sins. Repentance or contrition, and the spirit of consecration, are equally necessary. Without them there can be

<sup>1</sup> Mark xvi, 15.

no true prayer of the soul. There must be faith; faith in the form of confidence that our petitions will be granted.

There are certain elements of power in prayer which have a clear and sure ground in Scripture. As prayer itself is so vital to our spiritual life, and its prevalence so necessary to its best service therein, we may briefly, yet with profit, set forth these elements of its power.

Fervency of mind is one element. Here is its Scripture ground: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."<sup>1</sup> Our translation does not fully express the meaning of the original—*ἐνεργουμένη*—which means inwrought, inworking with force or energy. In such a prayer the mind is intensely active. The object for which we pray is grasped in all the vigor of thought and feeling. The mind wrestles, struggles for its attainment. Such a prayer is not a mere form of words upon the lips, but an intensity of thought and feeling within the soul; and such a prayer "availeth much." Only with deep meditation upon the importance of the things for which we pray, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, which shall not be denied us, can we attain to such fervency.

Another element of power lies in the help of the Holy Spirit. There are in Scripture clear promises of his help, and statements which mean the same thing.<sup>2</sup> Then we have these explicit words: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."<sup>3</sup> There is here a clear recognition of our own weakness, "for we know not what we should pray for as we ought." So "the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities." There are many ways in which he may thus help us. He may give us a deeper sense of our spiritual needs, clearer views of the fullness and freeness of the divine grace, and kindle the fervor of our supplication. But we reach a deeper meaning in the words, "But the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us." He joins us in our prayers; pours his supplications into our own. Nothing less can be the meaning of these deep words. The same meaning is in the verse immediately following: "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

Here is the source of the glowing fervor and the effectual power of prayer. There are instances which cannot else be explained. Such was the prayer of Jacob;<sup>4</sup> such the prayer of

<sup>1</sup> James v, 16. <sup>2</sup> Zech. xii, 10; Eph. vi, 18. <sup>3</sup> Rom. viii, 26. <sup>4</sup> Gen. xxxii, 24-30.

Moses;<sup>1</sup> and such the prayer of Elijah.<sup>2</sup> Many such instances have been witnessed in the history of the Church; INSTANCES OF SUCH PRAYER. very different, indeed, in the circumstances, but verily such in their marvelous fervor and power. Praying souls have been lifted far above their own powers and wrapped in a divine fervor. Unyielding faith has grasped the blessing, and the gracious heavens have bent down to the needy earth.

Another element of this power lies in the intercession of Christ. INTERCESSION OF CHRIST. In his high-priestly office he presents our prayers with the incense of his own blood and the intercession of his own prayers: "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."<sup>3</sup> Thus it is that Christ presents our prayers with the incense of his redeeming grace and the prevailing pleas of his intercession.

With the clear apprehension of such elements of its power, even the rarest instances of the fervor and efficacy of prayer RÉSUMÉ. should cause no surprise. We must think that our heavenly Father will graciously hear the supplications of his children, even of the feeblest, when in the use of their own powers they pour their souls into their petitions. Even earthly parents answer the prayers of their children: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"<sup>4</sup> But far greater powers than our own are at work in our prayers, particularly in their higher forms of fervency. The Holy Spirit helps our infirmities, lifts us up into a strength infinitely above our own, and breathes his own prayers into our supplications. Then our great High Priest receives these supplications, and through the blood of atonement presents them in his own intercession. Prayer now rises above all that is merely human and takes unto itself the efficiencies of divinity. The marvel then is, not that prayer sometimes has such power, but that we so rarely attain to its exercise.

4. *The Sacraments.*—We here view the sacraments as means of grace. Other important questions respecting them must be deferred for separate treatment.

The term sacrament is from the Latin word *sacramentum*, which in its classical use meant the pledge-money deposited by the

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxxii, 9-14.    <sup>2</sup> James v, 17, 18.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. viii, 3, 4.    <sup>4</sup> Matt. vii, 11.

parties at issue in a lawsuit, and, at a later date, the security which they gave instead. It also meant the oath of a soldier whereby he pledged his fidelity in the military service.

MEANING OF  
THE TERM.

Finally it meant simply an oath, obligation, or bond. On the ground of such ideas the Latin fathers applied the term to baptism and the Lord's Supper. These sacred ordinances were viewed as sacraments because the observance of them meant an assumption of the obligations of a Christian life and a pledge of fidelity to Christ. Such they are as viewed on the human side; but they have a sacramental meaning also from the divine side. They are signs and pledges of the divine grace. Such meaning is expressed in one of our own articles of faith: "Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of

CONFESSIONAL  
STATEMENTS.

Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm, our faith in him."<sup>1</sup> The two views are thus combined: "A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ in his Church, to signify, seal, and exhibit unto those that are within the covenant of grace the benefits of his mediation; to strengthen and increase their faith, and all other graces, to oblige them to obedience."<sup>2</sup>

The sacraments have a symbolical character. Baptism represents the work of regeneration through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Supper represents the atonement in the sacrificial death of Christ. It is also commemorative of his death. Both the emblematic and the memorial services are presented in a single text of Scripture. When, in the institution of the supper, Christ gave the bread to his disciples, he said: "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."<sup>3</sup>

SYMBOLICAL  
CHARACTER.

Much account is made of the sacraments as seals. The view is well stated in the following citation: "They are also seals. A seal is a confirming sign, or, according to theological language, there is in a sacrament a *signum significans*, and a *signum confirmans*; the former of which is said, *significare*, to notify or to declare; the latter, *obsignare*, to set one's seal to, to witness. As, therefore, the sacraments, when considered as signs,

AS SEALS.

<sup>1</sup> Article xvi.    <sup>2</sup> *Westminster Larger Catechism*, Q. 162.    <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xi, 24-26.

contain a declaration of the same doctrines and promises which the written word of God exhibits, but addressed by a significant emblem to the senses; so also as *seals*, or pledges, they confirm the same promises which are assured to us by God's own truth and faithfulness in his word (which is the main ground of all affiance in his mercy), and by his indwelling Spirit by which we are 'sealed,' and have in our hearts 'the earnest' of our heavenly inheritance. This is done by an external and visible institution; so that God has added these ordinances to the promises of his word, not only to bring his merciful purpose toward us in Christ to mind, but constantly to assure us that those who believe in him shall be and are made partakers of his grace. These ordinances are a pledge to them that Christ and his benefits are theirs, while they are required, at the same time, by faith, as well as by the visible sign, to signify their compliance with his covenant, which may be called 'setting to their seal.'"<sup>1</sup>

In considering the sacraments as means of grace we should not overlook the limitation which such designation imposes. LIMITATION OF MEANS. Means to ends have no intrinsic power for their effectuation. Means of grace are not in themselves grace, nor fountains of grace, but simply aids, in the proper use of which grace is attained. All this is true of the sacraments. They are not in themselves grace, nor the immediate source of grace. There is no profit in their observance without the proper mental exercise; no benefit in any merely mechanical or magical mode. The doctrine of such benefit is a pernicious error, which has been widely and deeply harmful to the spiritual life. It is a doctrine of salvation without sanctification. The substance is lost in the ceremony; the circumcision of the heart, in the circumcision of the flesh. The error carries with it ecclesiasticism and sacerdotalism, transubstantiation and consubstantiation.

How, then, are the sacraments means of grace? In the same manner as the word of God. In the latter we have the best exemplification of the former. SACRAMENTS AS MEANS. And we have already seen how the word of God is a means of grace. It is such as it makes duty clear to us and sets before us incentives to its fulfillment; such, as it reveals the salvation in Christ and assures us of its attainment on a compliance with its terms. In the form of signs, or in the mode of representation, the sacraments fulfill like offices. Through them such lessons are impressively given.

Baptism sets before us the need of spiritual regeneration, and points us to its divine source in the agency of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>1</sup> Watson: *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 612.



The Lord's Supper signifies to us the atonement in his death as the only ground of our salvation. In this manner the great lesson is most impressively given. Therein Christ crucified is openly set before us.<sup>1</sup> In no service do we get nearer to the cross. Still, there is no spiritual attainment unless we grasp in thought the great truth of the atonement, and in penitence and faith appropriate the provisions of its grace. The grace we need is not in the water, but in the work of the Holy Spirit which its baptismal use represents; not in the bread and wine, but in the atonement which their sacramental use signifies.

AS SYMBOLS.

That the sacraments are seals means no other mode of spiritual benefit. It is true that they are something more than mere signs of grace; they are divine pledges of its bestowment.

AS SEALS.

But the bestowment is pledged only on the proper conditions; and these lie, not in the mere observance of the sacraments, but in the proper mental exercise. Hence there is in their sealing office no new law of spiritual benefit. The promises of God are a means of grace as they warrant our faith. A divine seal or pledge is the same, with the only difference that it may be a stronger warrant. But it can be such only as viewed from the human side. On the divine side God's pledge can add nothing to the certainty of his promise, which rests simply on his own fidelity. Hence it is in condescension to our weakness that he pledges his own good will toward us. Thus when God made promise to Abraham he ratified it by an oath, that both he and "the heirs of promise" with him might have the stronger assurance of its fulfillment.<sup>2</sup> The oath of God is not without value because it could really add nothing to the certainty of his promise; it is of value because it helps the weakness on the human side and gives the stronger warrant of faith. In such a manner the sacraments, as seals of the divine covenant, are means of grace.

## II. CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

1. *Meaning of the Rite.*—Baptism is the sign of spiritual regeneration. This is its central, though not its only, meaning. These statements accord with its definition in our Article of Religion: "Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth."<sup>3</sup> Such in substance is the doctrine of other Protestant Churches, particularly of those in the line of the Reformed.<sup>4</sup>

In some instances baptism seems closely related to justification;

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iii, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. vi, 13-18.

<sup>3</sup> Article xvii.

<sup>4</sup> *Westminster Confession*, chap. xxviii.

quite as closely, indeed, as to regeneration. It must be so related in the great commission ; for justification is a part of the salvation therein set forth.<sup>1</sup> There is a like meaning in the words of Ananias to Saul : “ And now why tarriest thou ? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”<sup>2</sup> This washing must include the remission of sins. The most notable instance appears in the words of Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost : “ Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”<sup>3</sup> Yet baptism is not to be thought conditional to justification in the manner that faith is. Much less can we think it a saving ordinance. Faith is a necessary condition of justification, while baptism is not. That it is not is conceded by all who require the profession of a state of grace in order to baptism ; for such a state must include justification ; and it is a very plain fact that baptism cannot be the necessary condition of a state of grace which must precede its observance. The meaning of the text cited is, that baptism is a sign or profession of the faith on which justification or the remission of sins is received. It is also the rite of initiation into the Christian Church, just as circumcision was the rite of initiation into the Abrahamic covenant or the Jewish Church.

It is still true, as before stated, that baptism is specially the sign of spiritual regeneration. As water purifies our physical nature, so in its baptismal use it signifies a purification of our moral nature through the agency of the Holy Spirit. This is the meaning of the words of our Lord : “ Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”<sup>4</sup> The baptism is the sign of the moral purification which is efficaciously wrought by the Holy Spirit. Such, too, is the meaning of the words : “ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”<sup>5</sup> Here the only efficacious regeneration is in the renewing power of the Holy Spirit ; of which, therefore, the baptismal regeneration must be the sign.

2. *Mode of Administration.*—The questions respecting the mode and the subjects of baptism have been much in dispute. Both have been frequently and elaborately discussed ; so that ample sources of information are easily at the command of any who

<sup>1</sup> Mark xvi, 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xxii, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Acts ii, 38.

<sup>4</sup> John iii, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Titus iii, 5.

would thoroughly study them. Our own treatment must be limited to brief statements.

The original words specially concerned in the question of mode are βάπτω and βαπτίζω. The immersionist relies much upon them for the proof of his doctrine. His argument is based upon their meaning in classical use; but, while it may be presented with seeming strength, it is far from being conclusive. If in such use these words invariably meant immersion, the fact would not itself prove that such is the only mode of Christian baptism. It would not so prove for the reason that in many instances Greek words receive new meanings in their biblical use. We have an illustration in the words for holiness, the new meanings of which were pointed out in our treatment of sanctification. Many instances might easily be added. It will be shown that the words relating to baptism are used in Scripture without the meaning of immersion. Further, while such is the common meaning in their classical use, there are exceptions. This is the position of writers of the best scholarship—immersionists included. Indisputable instances of such use are given.<sup>1</sup> Hence it is futile to attempt to prove from the classical use of the original words that immersion is the only mode of Christian baptism. The question of mode must be studied in the biblical use of these words and in the light of the instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament. Other facts which concern the question will be noticed in the proper place.

In the biblical use of the original words there are instances in which the idea of immersion is inadmissible, and also instances in which it is excluded. In the ceremonial cleansing of a leper two birds were used in the following manner: “And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip—βάψει—them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water.”<sup>2</sup> It is obvious that immersion is an impossible meaning of the original word in this case. The living bird could not be immersed in the blood of the slain bird; much less could the living bird, with the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, be so immersed. Boaz said to Ruth, “Dip—βάψεις—thy morsel in the vinegar.”<sup>3</sup> It is true that immersion is not an impossibility in this case, but the notion of it is surely very unnatural to the action invited. When

THE ORIGINAL  
WORDS.

CLASSICAL  
USAGE.

BIBLICAL USE  
WITHOUT THE  
IDEA OF IM-  
MERSION.

<sup>1</sup> Beecher: *Baptism*, pp. 9-18; Dale: *Classic Baptism*

<sup>2</sup> Lev. xiv, 5, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Ruth ii, 14.

it is said that Jonathan dipped—*ἐβαψεν*—the end of a rod in a honey-comb, it cannot mean that the immersion of the end was a necessary part of his action.<sup>1</sup> “That thy foot may be dipped—*βαφῆ*—in the blood of thine enemies.”<sup>2</sup> Here immersion would be an unnatural meaning; indeed, an impossibility, except in a most extraordinary case. It is said of Nebuchadnezzar that “his body was wet—*ἐβάφη*—with the dew of heaven.”<sup>3</sup> Such a baptism cannot mean immersion.

Baptisms were frequent among the Jews, so that the institution of Christian baptism brought no novelty into Jewish thought. There was a baptism in the washing of hands. The Pharisee with whom our Lord dined marveled that he had not first washed—*ἐβαπτίσθη*—before dinner.<sup>4</sup> He marveled because the custom was so uniformly observed: “For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash—*βαπτίσονται*—they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing—*βαπτισμοὺς*—of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.”<sup>5</sup> The washing of hands is not by dipping; not even when they are dipped in a basin of water. In such case the dipping is simply for the purpose of taking up the water into the hands in order to the washing. Besides, it was not the custom of the Jew to use a basin in this washing, but to have the water poured upon his hands. While in the former case the idea of immersion as the mode of washing is entirely inadmissible, in the latter it is utterly excluded. It is equally inadmissible in the washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables. Immersion in any such case is merely a matter of convenience, and does not belong to the mode of the washing. The aim is a cleansing or purification in the use of water; and water is applied in the mode of pouring, or in a manner answering to the idea of pouring. Such a washing the Scriptures call a baptism.

In the Mosaic economy there were many ceremonial services in the mode of sprinkling. The assembled people were thus sealed unto God in the covenant which he made with them.<sup>6</sup> The Levites were consecrated to their office by sprinkling: “Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them.”<sup>7</sup> “And

CEREMONIAL  
PURIFICA-  
TIONS.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. xiv, 27.    <sup>2</sup> Psa. lxxviii, 23—Sept. 24.    <sup>3</sup> Dan. iv, 33—Sept. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xi, 38.    <sup>5</sup> Mark vii, 3, 4.

<sup>6</sup> Exod. xxiv, 8; Heb. ix, 19, 20.

<sup>7</sup> Num. viii, 6, 7.

almost all things are by the law purged with blood.”<sup>1</sup> This summary follows a detailed statement of purifications or “divers washings”—*διαφόροις βαπτισμοῖς*.<sup>2</sup> These purifications, whether in the use of blood or water, were in the mode of washing or sprinkling. Their symbolical meaning was the same as that of Christian baptism, with the only difference of a deeper spiritual idea in the latter; and there is no apparent reason why this rite should be restricted to the mode of immersion, while so many purifications were mostly in that of sprinkling. It is plain that nothing in the mode can be necessary to the service of the rite. Baptism by pouring or sprinkling as fully signifies an inner purification as baptism by immersion. To deny this is to discredit the emblematic service of the many rites of purifying in the Mosaic economy. The apostles, in common with the Jewish people, were familiar with the meaning of these rites and the mode in which they were administered. Therefore only a specific communication or command could have conveyed to their minds the idea of immersion as the only mode of Christian baptism. But no such communication or command was given. Certainly there is no account of any. We have seen that *βαπτίζω*, in the use of which the observance of this rite is enjoined, has no such specific meaning. Surely, then, it could have no such meaning for the apostles, whose minds were so familiar with baptisms and purifications in the modes of washing and sprinkling. The facts presented in this paragraph are strongly against the position of the immersionist.

The gracious work of the Holy Spirit is often expressed as a baptism, and not only without the idea of immersion, but in its exclusion. “So shall he sprinkle many nations.” “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.” The terms of the symbolical purification are here employed to express the efficacious work of the Spirit in the actual purification of the soul. The idea of immersion is thus excluded. “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me . . . shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” In such baptism Christ fulfilled the prophecy of Joel: “I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.” This fulfillment began on the day of Pentecost.<sup>6</sup> The one word of mode is pouring, not immersion. “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”<sup>7</sup> In like manner, the cleansing

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ix, 22. <sup>2</sup> Heb. ix, 10. <sup>3</sup> Isa. lii, 15; Ezek. xxxvi, 25. <sup>4</sup> Matt. iii, 11.

<sup>5</sup> Joel ii, 28. <sup>6</sup> Acts ii, 16, 17. <sup>7</sup> Heb. x, 22.

work of the blood of Christ is symbolically expressed as in the mode of sprinkling: "But ye are come unto . . . Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling."<sup>1</sup> "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup> The texts cited in this paragraph make it plain that the purifying work of the Spirit is expressed as a baptism, but ever in the mode of sprinkling or pouring, never in that of immersion. Why, then, should immersion be necessary to the baptism with water whereby his efficacious work is symbolized? It is plain also in the same texts, as it is in others, that baptism is symbolical of the cleansing work of the blood of atonement. Why, then, should immersion be necessary in the symbolization, when in the actual cleansing the blood is represented as applied in the mode of sprinkling? Indeed, these terms of pouring and sprinkling, as thus applied to the work of the Holy Spirit and the blood of atonement, are quite conclusive against the theory of the immersionists.

We need only a brief consideration of the leading instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament. They will not be found in favor of the immersionist; rather, they will be found strongly against him.

The baptism of John was special in its end—repentance for the remission of sins: "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."<sup>3</sup> However, baptism itself was neither peculiar to his ministry nor novel to the Jewish mind. As we have seen, baptisms were frequent, and in various modes under the Mosaic law; so that they were familiar to the Jewish people. John himself was familiar with those baptisms. What, then, is the presumption respecting the mode in which he administered the rite? Certainly not that it was uniformly in that of immersion. As the baptisms with which he was familiar were mostly by sprinkling, the presumption is strongly against such uniformity. Hence, unless he was divinely commanded to observe the mode of immersion, or there is something in the account of his baptizing which must mean immersion, there is no proof of such uniform mode, and the probabilities are strongly against it. There is certainly no account of any such divine command. It may be assumed; but assumption is without logical value for the immersionist. It may be assumed that John was commanded to baptize, and then asserted that immersion is in the meaning of the word in the use of which the administra-

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii, 22-24.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. i, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Luke iii, 3.

tion of the rite was enjoined ; but as such an assertion is groundless, so the assumption on which it rests is without value for the proof of immersion.

There is nothing in the account of the baptizing of John in proof of immersion ; much less of a uniformity of such mode. One proof alleged is that he baptized in the river Jordan.<sup>1</sup> The argument hinges upon the meaning of *in*—*ἐν*; but this word often means at, by, or with ; so that immersion is no necessary meaning of baptizing in Jordan. If John brought the subject within or to the margin of the river, and then applied the water by affusion or sprinkling, he would be baptizing in Jordan in a manner agreeing with a proper meaning of the original words.

Another argument is based on his baptizing at Ænon because there was much water there.<sup>2</sup> But the much water, or many waters—*ὕδατα πολλὰ*—do not necessarily mean either one or many large bodies of water. A few springs or runs, without a capacity for the immersion of an adult person in any one of them, would fully answer for the meaning of the original words. Further, it is groundless to assume that the requirement for immersion was the only reason, and therefore the actual reason, why John selected this place of much water. There was an entirely sufficient reason in the daily wants of the multitudes drawn to his ministry. These wants could be met only in a place well supplied with water. Hence there is really no proof of immersion in the reason given for John's baptizing at Ænon.

The number of the baptisms administered by John in the brief time of his ministry is conclusive against the theory of immersion. Ten months are a liberal estimate for the duration of that ministry.<sup>3</sup> Ten months give an aggregate of three hundred and four days ; but we require considerable reduction in order to a fair estimate of the actual number in which John baptized. The Sabbaths must be deducted, because the Jewish ideas and customs then in force require it. Further, the administration of baptism could not have commenced, certainly not in any considerable numbers, with the preaching of John ; and some reduction must be made on this account. Again, his ministry included the winter and the rainy seasons, so that on many days the attendance of the people would be greatly hindered ; and thus there would be a loss of time for baptizing. After the proper reduction on the grounds stated, not more than two hundred and fifty days, really not so many, could remain for this service.

The baptisms administered by John were very many. Exact

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iii, 6.   <sup>2</sup> John iii, 23.   <sup>3</sup> Hibbard : *Christian Baptism*, pp. 20-22.

numbers are not given, but the terms used warrant the estimation of a great multitude. "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."<sup>1</sup> In other gospels the facts are stated in like terms.<sup>2</sup> The places here named contained a large population, certainly not less than two or three millions. It is not to be thought that literally all were baptized by John; yet certainly a great many were. No other view could be consistent with the statements respecting the number. Let us make the low estimate of one hundred and fifty thousand. How, then, will the case stand? The figures require an average of six hundred baptisms per day, and of one per minute for ten hours per day. Here are insuperable difficulties for the immersionist. No man could immerse sixty persons in a decent and orderly manner in one hour. No man could endure the strain of such a service for many successive days. Besides, John was a preacher as well as a baptizer; and the time occupied in preaching, and in necessary or unavoidable conversations with the many people, must be deducted from the time available for baptizing. Thus, again, is it manifest that John could not possibly have baptized so many in the mode of immersion. Indeed, it is scarcely to be thought that he could baptize so many individually in any mode. Nor is there any need to assume that he did. It is quite reasonable to think that he baptized many together, as Moses did when he sprinkled the assembled people.<sup>3</sup>

There is no peculiar proof of immersion in the baptism of our Lord, nothing alleged as proof which does not fully appear in other instances. Only two things can be so alleged: the meaning of the original word which expresses the act of baptizing, and the statement that Christ "went up straightway out of the water."<sup>4</sup> Respecting the first, we have already seen that immersion is not the uniform meaning of the original word; hence it is not conclusive of immersion in this case. The going up out of the water was subsequent to the baptism, and therefore no part of it. Neither do the words mean a going up from under the water. Hence this fact is without the slightest meaning in favor of immersion. Further, as the baptisms administered by John could not have been in such a mode, except in rare instances, the presumption is strongly against the immersion of Christ.

The baptisms on the day of Pentecost could not have been in the mode of immersion.<sup>5</sup> The facts clearly show this. There was no

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iii, 5, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Mark i, 5; Luke iii, 3, 7, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Exod. xxiv, 8; Heb. ix, 19.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. iii, 16.

<sup>5</sup> Acts ii, 37-41.



convenient place for such an administration. Neither Kidron, nor Siloam, nor Bethesda, nor all together are to be thought of as offering such a convenience. Nor can any other place even be suggested. There is no intimation of a resort to any such place. With the best place right at hand such a mode of baptism would still have been an impossibility. The necessary time was lacking. It was probably eleven o'clock before the preaching service was concluded. The necessary conversation with the converts, either with all before the baptism began or with each as it proceeded, would require much time. Each apostle must converse with and baptize two hundred and fifty persons; such must be the average. Three minutes for the conversation and immersion in each case are an unreasonably low estimate of the necessary time. But even this estimate requires twelve and a half hours for the whole service. There is not only this lack of time, but the average physical strength could not endure the strain of such a service.

The baptism of a man of Ethiopia by Philip is an instance in much favor with the immersionist. With him its argumentative value lies chiefly in the facts, as stated, that "they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch," and "they came up out of the water."<sup>1</sup> It is obvious that the baptism was a distinct act from both the going down into the water and the coming up out of the water, in which acts both Philip and the eunuch participated alike. Indeed, the baptizing is stated as an intervening and distinct act. Hence nothing in the manner of going down into the water, not even if taken in the extreme sense of going under the water, can determine any thing respecting the mode of the baptism; much less, that it was by immersion. However, no one can soberly interpret the going down into the water in the sense of immersing. Hence there is no need of showing, as we might easily, that going to the margin of the water would express a proper and frequent meaning of the original words. Instances of such a meaning of *εἰς* may be found in the account of several visitations to the tomb of our Lord on the morning of his resurrection.<sup>2</sup> The idea of "going down" has a very natural interpretation in the descent of a declivity from the place where the chariot stood. There is really no proof of immersion in this instance of baptism.

Saul of Tarsus was baptized by sprinkling or affusion. The facts in the case clearly point to such a mode, and are inconsistent with that of immersion.<sup>3</sup>

Only two facts need be noted: one, that he was baptized in the

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii, 38, 39.    <sup>2</sup> John xx, 1, 3, 4, 8.    <sup>3</sup> Acts ix, 17, 18; xxii, 12-16.

house where he had been for three days ; the other, that he was baptized in a standing posture. Such is the meaning of the two narratives. The first fact renders immersion most improbable ; the second utterly disproves it.

Certain baptisms in the house of Cornelius and in the prison of Philippi may be passed with a brief notice.<sup>1</sup> Nothing in either narrative favors the view of immersion ; rather, the facts of each are quite conclusive of sprinkling or affusion. In the former account it is plain that the baptisms were administered in the house of Cornelius, and in the room in which Peter preached to the people therein assembled. The theory of immersion in such a case would require the most unwarranted assumption respecting the necessary means ; while the facts are all natural and simple on that of sprinkling or affusion. The baptisms in Philippi were administered in the prison. Paul and Silas went not out of the prison any further than into the jailer's house, which joined on to the prison. Nor did this occur until after the baptizing. Only one phrase can be opposed to this view : " He brought them out ; " but this can mean only from the inner prison into the outer apartment. Here it was that Paul and Silas preached to the jailer and others and baptized them. In this case, as in the former, the theory of immersion requires the most unwarranted assumption respecting the necessary means, while the theory of sprinkling or affusion is without any perplexity.

Two phrases of Scripture are regarded by the immersionist as quite conclusive of his theory : " Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death ; " " Buried with him in baptism. " <sup>TWO PHRASES.</sup> These phrases must be interpreted in the light of the passages to which they belong ; for only in this manner can their true meaning be reached. In each passage the ruling idea is the moral change wrought in the attainment of salvation. This change is expressed as a death, a crucifixion, a burial, a resurrection. There is in these forms of expression, and for the purpose of illustration, a comparison with the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. What, then, is the part of baptism in the expression of this moral change ? Simply that of a sign ; nothing else. There is then no reference to the mode of baptism. Nor is there in either phrase the slightest proof of immersion.

3. *The Subjects of Baptism.*—All who through faith in Jesus Christ enter into a regenerate state are proper subjects of Christian baptism. This, however, does not mean a rebaptism of any who were baptized in infancy. The fitness of the

<sup>THE TRULY RE-  
GENERATE.</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts x, 24-48 ; xvi, 23-33.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. vi, 4 ; Col. ii, 12.

regenerate for baptism is fully recognized by Peter: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"<sup>1</sup> However, there is such unanimity in Christian thought on this question that it may be passed without discussion.

There is not such unanimity respecting regeneration as an invariable requisite to fitness for baptism. Many hold that it is; but they can hardly claim the warrant of Scripture. OTHERS MAY BE BAPTIZED. They may be right as to the rule, but they are wrong in allowing no exceptions. The doctrine of Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost is against them; for he therein enjoined baptism in profession of the faith which should be unto justification and regeneration: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."<sup>2</sup> In like manner the baptism of Paul was prior to his regeneration, as it was prior to his justification.<sup>3</sup> In view of such facts the profession of a regenerate state should not be held as an invariable prerequisite to baptism. When there is satisfactory evidence of true penitence and the purpose of a Christian life in the fellowship of the Church the sacred rite may be administered as a means of grace; as a help to the faith which shall be unto salvation.<sup>4</sup>

Are infants proper subjects of Christian baptism? This is the chief question in issue respecting the subjects. If the question could be appealed to the faith of the Church THE CHIEF QUESTION. as authoritative in the case the decision would be overwhelmingly in favor of such baptism: so widely has this faith prevailed. It is not a question to be thus settled; yet the very strong preponderance of this faith is not without weight on the side of the affirmative.

The place of children, infant children, in the Abrahamic covenant means much in favor of infant baptism. The institution of this covenant is formally and fully given in ABRAHAMIC COVENANT. the Scriptures.<sup>5</sup> Before this, however, great promises had been made to Abraham; some of them very similar to the promises immediately connected with this covenant, while that respecting the Messiah was even more specific and full in the manner of its expression.<sup>6</sup> These earlier promises were gathered into this covenant made with Abraham, and therein sealed unto him and his seed. This covenant, with its promises, was renewed with Isaac, and also with Jacob.<sup>7</sup> It is replete with the promises of both secular and

<sup>1</sup> Acts x, 47.<sup>2</sup> Acts ii, 38.<sup>3</sup> Acts xxii, 16.<sup>4</sup> Merrill: *Christian Baptism*, pp. 10-12.<sup>5</sup> Gen. xvii, 1-14.<sup>6</sup> Gen. xii, 1-3; xv, 1-7.<sup>7</sup> Gen. xxvi, 3-5; xxviii, 10-15.

spiritual blessings. The former were fulfilled in the multiplicity of the progeny of Abraham, in their possession of the land of Canaan, and in their national greatness; the latter, in the coming of the Messiah as the promised seed of Abraham, and in the salvation which he brought to both Jews and Gentiles.<sup>1</sup>

That these promises included the Messiah himself, and the spiritual blessings of his kingdom, is clearly the sense of the Scriptures. Here is this definite and comprehensive promise: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."<sup>2</sup> Christ is the seed through whom this universal blessing should come. Such is the meaning of Paul when he declares that this promised seed is Christ.<sup>3</sup> This is the promise on the warrant of which, on the day of Pentecost, Peter offered to all the grace of salvation in Christ: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."<sup>4</sup> In the fulfillment of this promise the salvation in Christ comes to all without any distinction: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."<sup>5</sup> It is in the meaning of these words that this promise infolded the rich blessing of the Gospel. Such, too, is the meaning of these words: "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."<sup>6</sup>

That children were included in this covenant is too plain a fact to be questioned. They were initiated by the same rite whereby the promises of the covenant were sealed unto Abraham. Their initiation was not made a matter of the divine sufferance, but a matter of the divine command. Why then should they be denied the rite of baptism, which in the Christian Church occupies the place that circumcision occupied in the Abrahamic covenant? It will be no answer to ask in objection, What benefit can baptism render infants? because the same objection would lie equally against their circumcision under the Abrahamic covenant. If the reply should be that the children are not in the spiritual state which baptism signifies, the answer is that the same objection would have excluded them from the rite of circumcision. Again, if the reply should be that infants are incapable of the faith, on the condition of which the blessings of the Gospel are offered, the answer is that they were equally incapable of the mental exercises

<sup>1</sup> Merrill: *Christian Baptism*, discourse ii.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xxii, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iii, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Acts ii, 39.

<sup>5</sup> Gal. iii, 28, 29.

<sup>6</sup> Gal. iii, 8.

which in the case of adults were conditional to the spiritual blessing of the Abrahamic covenant. Infant circumcision under that covenant warrants the right of infants to baptism under the Christian covenant—which, indeed, is not another, but the very same in its full development. On the ground of such facts only a divine order could annul the right of infants to Christian baptism; but no such order has been given.

The identity of the Christian Church with the Church instituted in the family of Abraham furnishes the ground of further proof of infant baptism. The fact of such identity ONE CHURCH  
IN TWO FORMS. is clear in the light of the Scriptures. Abraham and his family were called of God from among the nations, and separated unto himself as his people. With them he instituted his covenant, with all its promises. Here is the central promise: “And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee.”<sup>1</sup> In this manner they were constituted the Church of God. This Church was perpetuated, and is in its fullness the Church of Christ. The Jews as a collective body ceased to be the Church, many of them being cast out because of unbelief, or broken off as branches of a tree, under the figure of which the Church is represented; but the tree remained, and the Gentile converts were grafted thereon among the branches that remained. Accordingly, they were charged not to boast against the branches, but to remember that they bore not the root, but the root them.<sup>2</sup>

In this one, ever-abiding Church there were ever the same spiritual blessings, with the only difference of a fuller development under the dispensation of the Gospel. In the beginning circumcision was the sign and seal of these INFANTS A  
RIGHT TO  
BAPTISM. blessings, while under the Gospel baptism took its place as the sign and seal of the same blessings; but all the while there is the one and the same Church. Now, as by authority of a divine command, infants were entitled to the rite of circumcision in the original institution of the Church, on what ground shall they be denied the rite of baptism in the same Church in its Christian state? As we have seen in another case, only a divine command could annul this right; but no such command has been given.

The apostles of our Lord were familiar with the place of infants in the Abrahamic Church; with the manner of their initiation by the rite of circumcision, and with the continuance of THOUGHT OF  
THE APOSTLES. this divine order to their own time. What, then, would they naturally think of the place of infants in the Church

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xvii, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xi, 17-21.

under its Christian form? Surely, that they were to be included in its membership just as they were in its Abrahamic form; and that they were entitled to Christian baptism, which replaced circumcision as the initiatory rite. Indeed, unless otherwise ordered, they must have thought themselves under obligation to administer this rite to infants. When, therefore, it is demanded that we produce the divine authorization of infant baptism, we answer, that no new command was necessary; that the old command remains in force, and must have so remained in the thought of the apostles. The substitution of circumcision by baptism under that command could affect neither its authority nor the obligation which it imposed. And now, in turn, even with far weightier reason may we demand of the opponent of infant baptism that he produce a divine order which repeals the old command or annuls its authority. There is no such order.

The words of our Lord respecting the relation of children to his kingdom clearly mean their right to Christian baptism. These words are so familiar that they here need no formal citation.<sup>1</sup> That these children were infants in the proper sense of the word is not to be questioned. When brought to Christ he received them graciously, and said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." He also said, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Such words must mean a close connection of children with the kingdom of God. Such connection must mean their right to a close relation with the Church; a right which no admissible distinction between the kingdom of God and the Church can deny. The privilege of such relationship must mean the right to Christian baptism.

Some hold that the words of our Lord, as above cited, mean a regenerate state of infants; that only on the ground of such a state could it be said that "of such is the kingdom of God." If actually in a regenerate state their right to baptism could hardly be questioned—a fact which no doubt favors this view. However, so long as their actual regeneration is an open question, it is doubtful if in this way anything is to be gained in favor of infant baptism. Are infants in a regenerate state? Our own writers are divided on this question. While some maintain the affirmative, we cannot think it in accord with the Scriptures or the doctrines of our Church. It is not consistent with our anthropology, as set forth in our seventh article, nor with the doctrine of our ritual for the baptism of infants, particularly as expressed in the introductory part. It is inconsistent with the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix, 13-15; Mark x, 13-16; Luke xviii, 15-17.

Scripture proofs of native depravity—the very proofs in which Methodism has ever grounded her own doctrine; particularly, with the deep words of our Lord in which he sets forth the necessity for spiritual regeneration: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” No words could more clearly or strongly assert the truth of native depravity. The doctrine of infant regeneration, or that all infants are born in a regenerate state, is openly contrary to this truth. The suggestion of a post-natal regeneration is without warrant, and out of harmony with the Scriptures.

“We hold that all children, by virtue of the unconditional benefits of the atonement, are members of the kingdom of God, and therefore graciously entitled to baptism.”<sup>1</sup> While these OUR DOCTRINE. words base the right of infants to baptism on their membership in the kingdom of God they omit all reference to a regenerate state as implied therein. The passage attempts no definition of the nature of that membership, but simply grounds it in the universal grace of the atonement and asserts the consequent right to baptism. We cordially accept the facts thus set forth. Of course it is easy to ask questions respecting them which may not easily be answered. On the other hand, if we assume a regenerate state of infants our position is beset with far greater difficulties. Infants are born into the covenant of redemption, and are all in some measure recipients of its grace. If they live to an accountable age this grace meets them at its threshold and, unless rejected, becomes their salvation; if they die in the infant state it unconditionally regenerates and saves them. On the ground of such facts they may properly be reckoned members of the kingdom of God and entitled to Christian baptism.

The right of infants to baptism is based on their relation to the atonement and the offices of the Holy Spirit, not on the faith of their parents or of any who may represent them. Yet GROUND OF RIGHTS. is it most fitting that those who present them for baptism should be graciously qualified to train them according to all the spiritual meaning of the sacred rite, and should assume the obligation so to do. Also, as “we regard all children who have been baptized as placed in visible covenant relation to God, and under the special care and supervision of the Church,” the Church herself should be profoundly concerned for their proper religious training.

No instance of the apostolic baptism of an infant is openly given in the Scriptures: so much must be conceded. That HOUSEHOLD BAPTISMS. there were such is most probable, as appears in the instances of household baptisms:<sup>2</sup> of Lydia and her household; of

<sup>1</sup> Methodist Discipline, ¶ 43, 1892.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xvi, 15, 33; 1 Cor. i, 16.

the jailer, and all his ; of the household of Stephanas. If there were infants and infant baptisms in these families no additional word nor other form of words would be needed for the expression of either fact. If there were infants the words clearly mean their baptism. That there was not one child yet in an infant state in any one of these families it is most unreasonable to think. So strong is the probability of infant baptism under apostolic administration.

The historical argument, based upon very early Christian literature, is strongly confirmatory of the apostolic origin of infant baptism. However, as its full presentation would require an elaboration for which we have no room, we pass it with a brief notice. It seems quite needless to adduce any testimony from writers of the fourth century, or even of the third, as it will hardly be questioned that infant baptism was then the custom of the Church.

Tertullian was a presbyter in the second century, only a century after apostolic times. His writings make it clear that infant baptism was then uniformly practiced. If in his knowledge such was not the fact, or if he had known it to be of recent origin, or an innovation since apostolic times, the fact would have been of great service to him in support of some peculiar views which he advocated, and he certainly would have so used it ; but there is no such use. The sure inference is that there was no such fact. Hence Tertullian is on record as a witness to the uniform custom of infant baptism in his time—a custom long established and of unquestioned apostolic origin.

In the writings of both Justin Martyr and Irenæus there is very clear recognition of infant baptism as common in the Church. They were Christian writers of distinction within fifty years of the death of St. John. Irenæus was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John. It thus appears that these writers were very near to the founders of Christianity. Hence their clear recognition of infant baptism as the custom of the Church at so early a time is strongly confirmatory of its apostolic origin.

Beecher : *Baptism, its Import and Modes* ; Hibbard : *Christian Baptism* ; Bickersteth : *A Treatise on Baptism* ; Merrill : *Christian Baptism* ; Dale : *Classic Baptism ; Judaic Baptism ; Johanneic Baptism ; Christian Baptism* ; Wall : *The History of Infant Baptism* ; Wood : *Lectures on Infant Baptism* ; Cook : *Christianity and Childhood* ; Conant : *Meaning and Use of the Word Baptizein* ; Noel : *Essay on Christian Baptism* ; Carson : *Baptism in its Mode and Subjects*.



## III. THE LORD'S SUPPER.

1. *Institution of the Supper.*—Words of Scripture furnish the best statement of the institution of the Lord's Supper. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood WORDS OF INSTITUTION. of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."<sup>1</sup> As other statements in the gospels are in meaning the same their citation may be omitted.<sup>2</sup> We add the words of St. Paul: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."<sup>3</sup>

2. *Nature of the Supper.*—The true doctrine of the supper lies in the meaning of the words of institution, as above cited. That meaning must be found in their true interpretation. It is well known that interpretations widely differ; and a glance at such differences may clear the way to the truth of the question. With the omission of slighter differences, "there are but three ex- THREE EXPOSITIONS. positions made of 'this is my body:' the first, this is in itself before participation really and truly the natural substance of my body, by reason of the coexistence which my omnipotent body hath with the sanctified element of bread, which is the Lutherans' interpretation; the second, this is in itself and before participation the very true and natural substance of my body, by force of that Deity which with the words of consecration abolisheth the substance of bread, and substituteth in the place thereof my body, which is the Popish construction; the last, this hallowed food, through concurrence of divine power, is in verity and truth, unto faithful receivers, instrumentally a cause of that mystical participation whereby as I make myself wholly theirs, so I give them in hand an actual possession of all such saving grace as my sacrificed body can yield, and as their souls do presently need, this is to them, and in them, my body."<sup>4</sup> The last interpretation is substantially

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi, 26–28.<sup>2</sup> Mark xiv, 22–24: Luke xxii, 19, 20.<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xi, 23–26.<sup>4</sup> Hooker: *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book v, 167.

that of the Reformed Churches and other evangelical Protestants. The first two, while widely different in some things, are really one in the deeper principle—that of an actual partaking of the body and blood of Christ in the supper. Both are grounded in a literal sense of the words of institution: ‘this is my body,’ ‘this is my blood.’ The real difference concerns the manner in which the body and blood of Christ are so present in the supper as to be really, literally partaken of by the communicant.

In the Lutheran view there is no transubstantiation of the bread and wine, no change of their own constitution, but the body and blood of Christ are so present in, with, or under these elements as to be really, literally partaken of in the communion of the supper. Such participation is in no wise dependent upon the spiritual state of the communicant. The doctrine is that the ungodly, as really as the most devout, eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ. It must be so from the literal interpretation of the words of institution, “this is my body,” “this is my blood;” must be so from the very nature of the real presence maintained.

There is no such real presence of the flesh and blood of Christ in the supper as this doctrine maintains. It is not possible that there should be. The impossibility was pointed out in our review of the Lutheran Christology. The doctrine requires the omnipresence, or at least multipresence, of the body of Christ; and here is the impossibility which we allege. It cannot be overcome by the assumption of a communication of divine attributes to the human nature of Christ, on the ground of its union with the divine in his personality. That union no more lifts his human nature into the infinitude of the divine than it lowers his divine nature into the finiteness of the human.

The doctrine is grounded on a literal meaning of the words of institution, “this is my body,” “this is my blood;” but this meaning is unnatural and false; quite as unnatural and false as would be the interpretation of the words, “Washed us from our sins in his own blood,” in the sense of a literal washing in the blood of Christ. And the doctrine itself must widely depart from a literal sense before it can reach the meaning of the real presence in the words of institution. When, with bread and cup in hand, Christ says, “this is my body,” “this is my blood,” the only literal sense is, this bread is my body, this cup is my blood. The words of St. Paul, as before cited, place this view beyond question.<sup>1</sup> Hence in a strictly literal inter-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi, 23-26.

pretation the words of institution must mean that the bread and wine are the body and the blood of Christ. This, however, is contrary to the Lutheran doctrine, according to which NOT THE LUTHERAN VIEW. these elements suffer no change in their consecration, but remain bread and wine. How, then, after all the insistence upon a literal sense of the words of institution, do Lutherans construct their doctrine? They first invest the body of Christ with the necessary ubiquity, and then assert his bodily presence in, with, or under the bread and wine. We could hardly think of a doctrine of the supper more remote from the literal meaning of the words of our Lord in its institution.

In the Papistical doctrine of the supper Christ is held to be literally present in his flesh and blood, through the mode of PAPISTICAL DOCTRINE. transubstantiation. By virtue of the words of consecration the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ; so that literally, orally, or by the mouth we eat his flesh and drink his blood in the communion of the supper. The doctrine further is, that Christ is present in the supper not only in body, but also in his soul and divinity. It follows that he may be worshiped in the eucharist, and the eucharist itself be presented to the people for their adoration.

The only ground of such a doctrine lies in the assumption of a literal sense of the words, "this is my body." "this is ASSUMED LITERAL SENSE. my blood." Transubstantiation itself is a mere inference from this assumption. The bread and wine must be changed into the flesh and blood of Christ if they are really present in the supper, because there is no other way of accounting for their presence. This is the manner in which the doctrine is constructed. Without a literal sense of the words of institution it has not the slightest ground in Scripture.

The words of institution are easily interpreted without the literal sense. By a very common figure of speech we give to FIGURATIVE SENSE. an emblem or sign the name of that which it represents. This is often done in Scripture. Thus circumcision is called the covenant of God, of which it was simply the sign or seal.<sup>1</sup> The supper of the passover is called "the Lord's passover;"<sup>2</sup> but it could not be literally the Lord's passover, which was his own personal act; but it could be properly so named as it was the memorial of such act. As the sacramental rites of circumcision and the passover received the names of the things which they represented, so the bread and wine, as the divinely appointed symbols of the body and blood of Christ, were properly so named. This inter-

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xvii, 10, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xii, 11.

pretation is simple and natural, and free from the insuperable difficulties of a literal sense.

The bread and wine are not changed into the form of flesh and blood. After the words of consecration they are still bread and wine, just as they were before. For sense-perception and the tests of chemistry they are the very same. Against such proof it is idle to appeal to an opposing authority of the divine word, because there is no such contrary word in the case.

The transubstantiation maintained involves an absolute impossibility. Granted, that God could change the bread and wine into flesh and blood; but this is only a part of the doctrine. The whole doctrine is that they are changed into the flesh and blood of Christ. Herein lies the impossibility. That which never has incorporation into the body of Christ never can be his flesh and blood. There is no power even in God to make it such. Indeed, the very notion of it implies a contradiction, and, therefore, an absolute impossibility. And, surely, it will not be pretended that the bread and wine consecrated in the sacrament are actually incorporated into the body of Christ. We need no further refutation of such a doctrine.

The true nature of the supper is given in our own article of religion: "The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper is faith."<sup>1</sup>

3. *Factitious Sacraments.*—Only the divine agency can institute a truly religious sacrament. There are only two such in the Christian Church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The additional five of Romanism are without divine authority, and therefore are purely factitious. They are formally repudiated in one of our articles: "Those five commonly called sacraments, that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for sacraments of the Gospel; being such as have partly grown out of the *corrupt* following of the apostles, and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God."<sup>2</sup>

Augsburg Confession, part i, article x; Formula of Concord, Epitome, article vii; Krauth: *The Conservative Reformation and its Theology, The Lord's Supper*; Schmid: *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, part iv, chap. ii; Nevin: *The Mystical Union*; Council of Trent, 13th Session, canons i-xi; Moehler: *Symbolism*, book i, part i, chap. iv; Capel:

<sup>1</sup> Article xviii.

<sup>2</sup> Article xvi.

*The Faith of Catholics*, vol. ii, pp. 375-499; Vogan: *True Doctrine of the Eucharist*; Bickersteth: *The Lord's Supper*; Calvin: *Institutes*, book iv, chaps. xvii-xix; Dorner: *System of Christian Doctrine*, vol. iv, pp. 305-333; Armstrong: *The Sacraments of the New Testament*; Luekey: *The Lord's Supper*; Clarke: *The Eucharist*; Elliott: *Roman Catholicism*, book ii.

#### IV. CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH.

1. *Laity and Ministry*.—There is in Christianity a priesthood of the people. Such is the clear sense of the Scriptures; and the fact is commonly recognized by the Protestant Churches. The meaning of this priesthood is, not that Christian people are priests in any strict sense of the term, but that they have the privilege of access to God, and of receiving his blessing without the mediation of any human priest. This fact, however, does not <sup>A MINISTERIAL</sup> supersede the requirement of a ministerial <sup>CLASS.</sup> Church. There are many religious services which cannot be rendered in an orderly and profitable manner without such a class. Every religion has a ministry. In Judaism there was a divinely appointed order for conducting the religious services. In the founding of Christianity our Lord instituted a ministry, and clearly with the purpose of its perpetuation in the Church. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."<sup>1</sup> The functions of the ministry must ever constitute it a distinct class in the Christian Church. The divine vocation of those who are properly admitted to this sacred office must itself determine such distinction.

2. *Divine Vocation of the Ministry*.—Mental gifts and acquirements, refinements of culture, and the power of persuasive speech are of great value in the work of the ministry, but cannot in themselves warrant the assumption of its sacred duties. Neither is deep and earnest piety such a warrant, though indispensable to the best ministerial service. A glowing zeal for the cause of Christ and the salvation of souls should always possess the mind of a minister of the Gospel; yet such a zeal is possible, and often actual, without this special divine vocation; so that, while the lack of such zeal should discredit the profession of such a call, its possession should not in itself be accepted as the proof thereof.

The idea of a divine call to the office of the ministry is most reasonable. The preaching of the Gospel, with the <sup>PRAS-</sup> <sup>A REASONABLE</sup> <sup>IDEA.</sup> pastoral care which belongs to the office of the ministry, is the divinely instituted means for the conversion of sinners

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv, 11, 12.

and the spiritual edification of believers. It is, therefore, most reasonable that God should select his own agents, and specially call them into his service. It is not a case in which the securing of the necessary service could be wisely left either to the option of individuals or to the selection of the Church. The divine call means a far better service than could otherwise be obtained. God knows best who will best serve him in this ministry. Further, the fact of a divine call is itself an element of value in this service. Whoever ascends the pulpit with the conscious obligation and sanction of such a call ascends it with far greater strength than could else be possible to him. The recognition of such a call of the minister on the part of the people elicits a peculiar interest and secures for his words a weight of influence not otherwise practicable.

There is such a call. Under the Jewish economy a particular family and tribe were divinely set apart to the priestly office. The prophets were individually called of God into the office which they fulfilled—an office more definitely representative of the Christian ministry than that of the priesthood. Our Lord selected his own apostles and divinely commissioned them to their great work. When the vacancy caused by the apostasy of Judas was to be filled the apostles prayed and cast lots that they might know whom the Lord chose in his place.<sup>1</sup> Again, when the vast harvests, already ripe for the sickle, spread out before the few reapers, what was our Lord's instruction to them? "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."<sup>2</sup> The divine vocation of the ministry is the one specially divine fact in its constitution, and the one which the Church should most tenaciously hold. No question of orders or ordination has any such concern.

3. *Ecclesiastical Polity*.—The questions of ecclesiastical polity have been largely discussed. The actual forms of such polity, as representing the different theories, run through the whole scale from the simplest Congregationalism up to the Papacy. Theories are often maintained on the assumption of a divinely ordered polity; but there is no such polity; consequently such discussions are groundless. The question of chief importance is the adaptation of the polity to the attainment of the spiritual ends for which the Church is constituted. This should always be a determining principle. The principle means that the construction of a polity is left to the discretion of the Church; but it also means that the construction must be made in the light of her mission, and with a view to its very best

QUESTION OF  
CHIEF IM-  
PORTANCE.

<sup>1</sup> Acts i, 23-26.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. ix, 38.

accomplishment. The polity which answers to such end is easily vindicated.

The discretionary power of the Church, as above stated, appears in the light of three facts: the Church must have a polity; there is no divinely ordered polity; consequently it is left to the Church, and to each Church right-fully existing as such, to determine her own polity. A brief presentation of these points will comprise about all that we need further say.

Any society formed for the accomplishment of certain purposes requires some provisions of government, without which it could not even subsist, much less attain the ends of its formation. "It seems to belong to the very essence of a community, that it should have: (1) officers of some kind; (2) rules enforced by some kind of penalties; and (3) some power of admitting and excluding persons as members." So much is necessary to the existence of any community or society constituted for the accomplishment of definite ends; and so much is necessary to the existence of a Church. Hence, after a lucid presentation of the three points named, Whately concludes: "Since, therefore, this point, and also those others above mentioned, seem, naturally and necessarily, to belong to every regular community; since it must, in short, consist of regularly constituted *members*, subject to certain *rules*, and having certain *offices* it follows that whoever directs or sanctions the establishment of a community (as our Lord certainly did in respect of Christian Churches) must be understood as thereby sanctioning those institutions which belong to the essence of a community. To recognize a community as actually having a legitimate existence, or as allowably to be formed, is to recognize it as having *officers*, as having *regulations* enforced by certain penalties, and as admitting or refusing to admit *members*." The points thus made comprise only a minimum of what is necessary to the existence of even a local church. Much more is required when many such are united under a common government. In such case there must be constitutional provisions whereby the stability of the Church may be secured and the rights of its ministers and members protected. Also there must be provided the legislative, judicial, and executive offices necessary to the proper government of a Church so constituted.

There is no divinely ordered polity. No existing Church can show the original of its own form of government in the New Testament. It does not appear that there was any organic union

<sup>1</sup> Whately: *The Kingdom of Christ*, pp. 63, 64.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 67.

of the local churches in apostolic times ; yet the superintendency of the apostles was both a governing power over them and a bond of union between them ; so that they were neither Congregational in polity, nor yet organized and governed in such manner as, for instance, the Presbyterian, Protestant Episcopal, or Methodist Episcopal Church. It would be utterly vain for any one of these Churches, as it would be for any other, to assume that its own government was fashioned after a divine pattern. The fact that no discovery of a divinely ordered polity has ever been made proves beyond question that there is none.

The truth of our third point is clearly consequent to the truth of the first two. If a polity is necessary to the constitution and work of the Church, and none is divinely ordered, then it must be the right of the Church, and of every Church having a legitimate existence, to determine the form of her own government ; but ever with a view to the best accomplishment of her divine mission.

Certain facts which have special significance for this question are clearly observable upon the face of the New Testament. “ It is plainly recorded that they—the apostles—did establish churches wherever they introduced the Gospel ; that they ‘ ordained elders in every city ;’ and that the apostles again delegated that office to others ; that they did administer the rite of baptism to their converts ; and that they celebrated the communion of the Lord’s Supper. And, besides the general principles of Christian faith and morality which they sedulously set forth, they have recorded the most earnest exhortations to avoid ‘ confusion ’ in their public worship ; to do ‘ all things decently and in order ;’ to ‘ let all things be done to edifying,’ and not for vain-glorious display ; they inculcate the duty of Christians ‘ assembling themselves together ’ for joint worship ; they record distinctly the solemn sanction given to a Christian community ; they inculcate due reverence and obedience to those that ‘ bear rule ’ in such a community, with censure of such as ‘ walk disorderly ’ and ‘ cause divisions ;’ and they dwell earnestly on the care with which Christian ministers, both male and female, should be selected, and on the zeal, and discretion, and blameless life required in them, and on their solemn obligation to ‘ exhort, rebuke, and admonish ;’ yet with all this they do not record even the number of distinct orders of them, or the functions appropriated to each, or the degree, and kind, and mode of control they exercised in the churches. While the principles, in short, are clearly recognized, and strongly inculcated, which Christian communities and

NO DIVINELY  
INSTITUTED  
POLITY.

THE WORK OF  
THE CHURCH.

SIGNIFICANT  
FACTS.

ONLY PRINCIPLES  
GIVEN.



individual members of them are to keep in mind and act upon, with a view to the great objects for which these communities were established, the *precise modes* in which these objects are, in each case, to be promoted, are left—one can hardly doubt, studiously left—undefined.”<sup>1</sup> In view of such facts, and others like them, the same author elsewhere concludes: “Thus a further confirmation is furnished of the view that has been taken; namely, that it was the plan of the sacred writers to lay down clearly the *principles* on which Christian Churches were to be formed and governed, leaving the mode of application of those principles undetermined and discretionary.”<sup>2</sup>

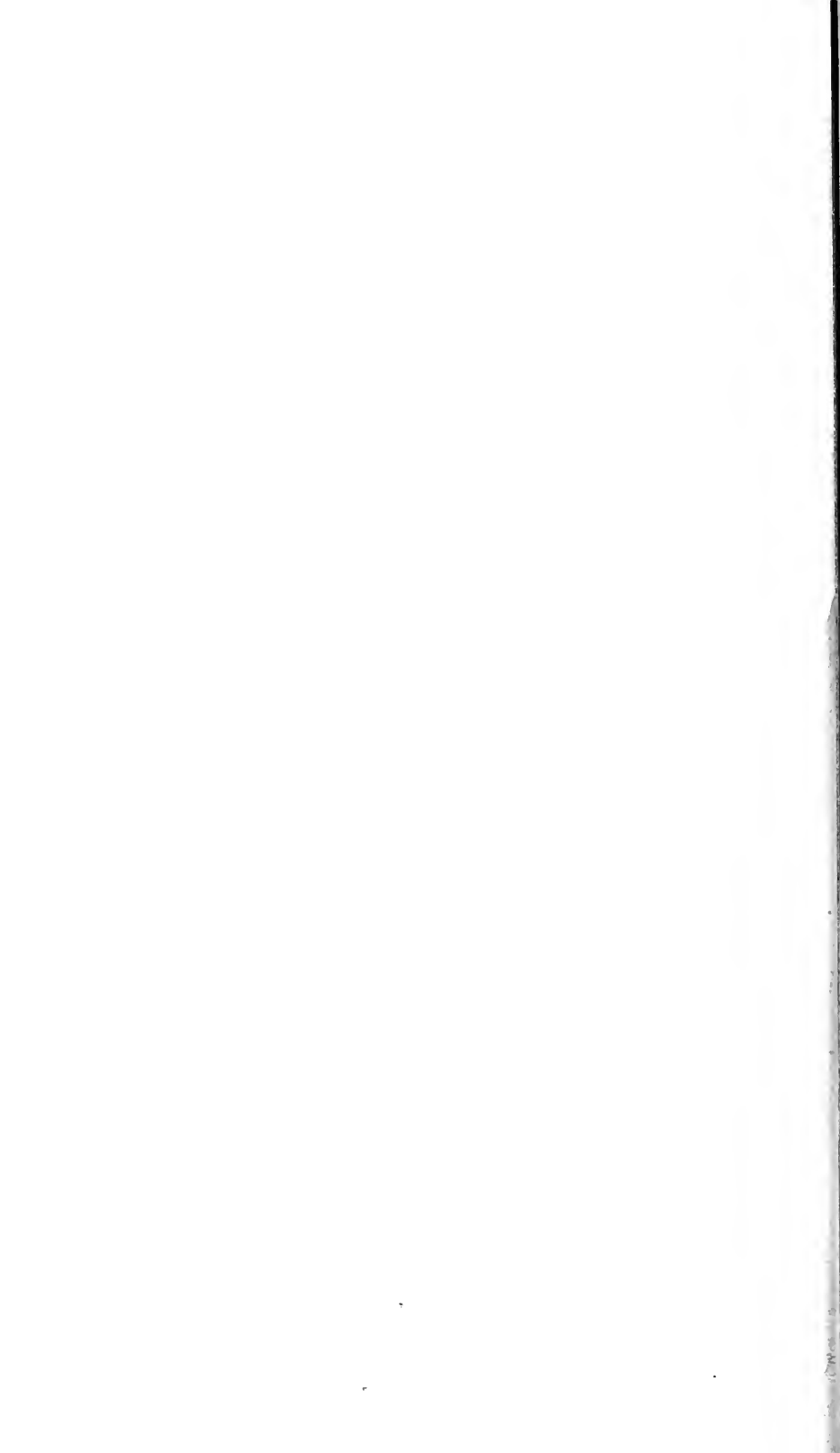
On the ground of the unquestionable facts and principles above set forth the organization of our Methodist Societies, of 1784, into the Methodist Episcopal Church, the form of her polity, and the institution of her ministerial orders are easily vindicated.

Bannerman : *The Church of Christ* ; Cunningham : *Discussion of Church Principles* ; Palmer : *Treatise on the Church of Christ* ; Whately : *The Kingdom of Christ* ; Binnie : *The Church* ; Hodge : *Church Polity* ; Morris : *Ecclesiology* ; Emory : *Defence of Our Fathers* ; Bangs : *An Original Church of Christ* ; Stevens : *Church Polity* ; Perrine : *Principles of Church Government* ; Neely : *Evolution of Episcopacy and Organic Methodism* ; Harrison : *The High Churchman Disarmed : A Defence of Our Methodist Fathers.*

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<sup>1</sup> Whately : *The Kingdom of Christ*, pp. 89-91.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.



PART VI.



ESCHATOLOGY.



# ESCHATOLOGY.

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ESCHATOLOGY is the doctrine of the last things, and comprises the questions respecting the intermediate state, the second advent, the resurrection, the judgment, and the destinies of the evil and the good. Underlying these questions, however, is the deeper one of a future existence, without the truth of which they have for us no interest—indeed, no reality—but with the truth of which they have for us the deepest concern. In view of such facts it is proper, first of all, to consider the question of a future existence.

## CHAPTER I.

### FUTURE EXISTENCE.

THE doctrine of a future existence properly includes two questions: one respecting the spirituality of mind; the other respecting its immortality. The relation of the former to the latter will appear in the discussion.

#### I. THE SPIRITUALITY OF MIND.

So much was said upon this question in our anthropological argument for the truth of theism that the less is here required.

1. *Falsity of Materialism.*—Materialism is an unprovable hypothesis. It is such because, in order to the proof, it must be shown, not only that mental facts have an adequate ground in matter, but also that they have their actual source in matter. Neither is a possibility. We have no empirical knowledge of matter as a substantive reality. On the observation of its properties or phenomena our reason affirms it to be such a reality. But materialism can admit no such form of reason. Its purely empirical philosophy limits knowledge to the mere surface of things. It deals with phenomena, and can know nothing deeper. Hence it cannot even affirm the reality of matter; much less, discover therein the adequate ground of mental facts. Nor can it show that such facts spring from matter. It may be shown that certain actions of the brain or sensory nerves are coincident with certain mental activities; but not the slightest proof could thus be

furnished that the former are the cause of the latter ; not any more, indeed, than that the latter are the cause of the former. Such coincidence cannot be made to mean any thing more than a present conditioning relation of the nervous organism to such mental activities ; but such relation is utterly short of being their ground. A spiritual nature in man is the only adequate ground of mental facts. That its presence cannot be discovered in any empirical way is no proof against its existence.

The scientific definitions of matter and mind give us two distinct and widely different sets of facts : the physical and the mental. Their difference is so real and deep that they must have essentially different grounds. Otherwise, we might interchange their definitions or use either for both. Materialism assumes this right. " In itself it is of little moment whether we express the phenomena of matter in the terms of spirit, or the phenomena of spirit in the terms of matter : matter may be regarded as a form of thought, thought may be regarded as a property of matter—each statement has a certain relative truth. But with a view to the progress of science, the materialistic terminology is in every way to be preferred."<sup>1</sup> Materialism is constrained to assume all this. That it is so constrained is conclusive of its falsity. The phenomena of matter cannot be expressed in the terms of spirit ; neither can the phenomena of spirit be expressed in the terms of matter. To attempt it is to ignore all the laws of scientific definition. Materialism is constrained, as appears in the above citation, to prefer the materialistic terminology, and thus to dismiss all terms expressive of the activities of mind in the forms of thought, sensibility, and volition. All must be reduced to the physical plane, and expressed in the terms of matter. Such necessity is quite conclusive of the falsity of materialism.

Materialism cannot account for the facts of mind. Any attempt to render such account must proceed either on the ground of the ultimate particles of matter or on some form of their combination. In the light of reason it is not possible that the primary atoms, as discrete entities, should be the original of mental facts. The possibility would mean either a distribution of the mental powers to as many separate atoms, or that one atom should possess the wealth of a mind. Neither is possible. With such a distribution of the faculties there could be no unity of action between them, and hence no mental life ; for such a life is possible only with the element of unity. That a single atom cannot be the seat of a complete set of mental

<sup>1</sup> Huxley : *Lay Sermons*, pp. 145, 146.

faculties needs only to be stated. No assumption of such a possibility needs any further refutation. The combinations of the atoms, whether in cohesive, chemical, or organic forms, can originate no new powers, whatever powers previously latent may thus find the conditions of their activity. But to say that mental powers thus find the condition of their action is to assume their prior existence in the atoms. Hence materialism, in attempting to account for the facts of mind on the ground of matter, is forced back to the impossible alternatives previously noted: either that the powers of the mind must exist distributively in an equal number of atoms, or that all must exist in one atom. The absolute impossibility of accounting for the facts of mind on the ground of matter is conclusive of the falsity of materialism.

2. *Truth of Spirituality.*—The materialist must face the reality of mental facts. That we think and reason; that we have sensibilities which are active, not only in the secular relations of life, but also in moral and religious forms; that we freely determine the ends of our action and voluntarily work for their attainment, are as real and certain as the properties of matter or the forces operative in physical nature. If the properties of body mean a substantive matter, our mental facts mean a spiritual mind. Their only sufficient ground is in such a mind. We saw elsewhere the perplexities of materialists at this point; how they confessed the impossibility of materialistic evolution, indeed, declared the utter absurdity of the theory, on the ground of the traditional doctrine of matter. It was openly conceded that only a new definition of matter, which should include mental facts as well as the physical, could render the theory possible or even tolerable. But matter is not changed by any new definition; its properties remain the very same. Defining matter in the terms of spirit does not make it spiritual or invest it with any of the properties of spirit. There is still the same contradictory opposition of the two sets of facts; so that the two cannot combine in the same ground. And it is still true that, if physical properties mean a substantive matter as their ground, mental facts mean a substantive spirit as their ground. Indeed, the proof of a spiritual mind in man is just as clear and sure as the proof of a substantive matter in the physical universe.

In the continuity of consciousness the personal self ever abides as the self-conscious subject. I am personally the same in the experiences of to-day that I was in the experiences of ten, twenty, or fifty years ago. In the light of consciousness nothing is more certain to me than this fact.

CERTAINTY OF  
MENTAL FACTS.

USELESS NEW  
DEFINITION OF  
MATTER.

CONTINUITY  
OF SELF-CON-  
SCIOUSNESS.

Such is the certainty of every man respecting himself, as he gathers up in memory the experiences of his past life. No length of life nor changes of experience, however extreme, can in the least affect his certainty. That the personal ego ever abides as the self-conscious subject of the experiences of the longest life is a fact which no subtlety can disturb. But it is a fact which can have no possible ground in materialism. The reason is obvious. Matter in the bodily organism of man, just as in every other form, is in perpetual flux and change. Not an atom of a present human brain will remain in it a few years hence. Thus in the progress of a long life many complete changes occur. With such changes the continuity of self-consciousness would be absolutely impossible on the ground of materialism. Spiritual mind, ever abiding in simple unity of essence, is the only possible ground of such consciousness. The fact of such consciousness is, therefore, conclusive of a spiritual mind in man.

3. *The View of Scripture.*—The Scriptures very clearly distinguish between the soul and the body, and as clearly mean the spirituality of the former. Such is the case in the account of the creation of man. Nothing less can be the meaning of his creation in the image of God.<sup>1</sup> There is no possible ground of a likeness to God in any creature without a spiritual nature. The account further is that God formed the body of man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, whereon he became a living soul.<sup>2</sup> That inbreathing means the creative act of God whereby he gave existence to the spiritual nature of man. “But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.”<sup>3</sup> Other words are even more explicit: “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”<sup>4</sup> The addition of one more text may here suffice: “And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”<sup>5</sup>

## II. THE IMMORTALITY OF MIND.

1. *Spirituality as Proof of Immortality.*—The argument from the simple spiritual unity of mind, once so much relied on as a proof of immortality, is now reckoned of far less weight. It is not of much weight as direct proof; for the dependence of the mind, as of every other creaturely existence, upon God requires that the question of its immortality be viewed in the light of his purpose respecting it. With such dependence upon God, in whom we live,

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i, 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. ii, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Job xxxii, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Eccles. xii, 7.

<sup>5</sup> Acts vii, 59.



and move, and have our being,<sup>1</sup> there is for us no immortality without his pleasure. Indirectly, however, the nature of the mind means much for its immortality. As a simple spiritual existence it is not subject to dissolution or death in the manner of compound or organic existences. Nothing in any such instance of dissolution or death can exemplify the extinction of the soul of man. Its extinction must be a virtual annihilation; and there is no natural evidence of such a destiny of the soul, but much against it. Only the clearest evidence that such is the divine pleasure could warrant the belief of it.

INDIRECT  
PROOF.

2. *A Question of the Divine Purpose.*—As the soul is naturally free from the common laws of dissolution and death, it may survive the body and exist in a future state. There is much natural evidence that it will; but as its very existence is dependent upon God, so, as we have seen, the question of its immortality can be determined only in view of the evidences of his pleasure respecting it.

3. *Evidences of the Divine Purpose.*—The further question then is, What are the evidences of the divine purpose respecting the immortality of the soul? These evidences lie partly in the endowments of the soul; pre-eminently in the economy of redemption.

God is the original of the soul, and of the intellectual powers with which it is endowed. Hence it is reasonable to think that he intends for it the opportunity of a development and attainment commensurate with its powers; indeed, it is unreasonable to think the contrary; for without such opportunity these powers can have no proper end in the plan of creation and providence. But the present life affords no such opportunity. Herein the most favored can only begin that intellectual life of which we are capable. With the many there is hardly a beginning. When will it be otherwise? The higher education of the masses is a remote futurity, with little promise in it. Our civilization is largely in an earthly plane, and imperatively demands much labor in which brawn has a much larger part than brain. Surely there is in the purpose of God a sphere of better opportunities for the intellectual life of man than the present life affords; a sphere which can be complete only with an immortal existence.

INTELLECTUAL  
FACULTIES.

The soul is morally constituted and subject to the law of duty and responsibility. No life ever attains a degree of perfection above such obligation: so high and exacting is this law. If it should follow that there is no perfect life, it may be for the reason that in our present state duty is beset with severe trials. Many strive after such a life, strive earnestly and

MORAL EN-  
DOWMENTS.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvii, 28.

persistently, and through great sacrifice and the loftiest moral heroism reach a high state of virtue. They come to the end of life in possession of the divinest graces. Shall such attainments perish in death? Shall the unyielding fidelity, the enduring fortitude, the conquering heroism, the pure flame of love, the charity which makes glad the heart of many, the graces which bless the vision of angels and merit the benediction of God—shall all these perish in the hour of death? No: reason and religion, the character of God and the interests of the moral universe, answer, No. There must be another life in which such graces shall still live, and such souls receive the reward of the heavenly Father, who is not unrighteous to forget their work and labor of love.<sup>1</sup>

Even the fact of sin points to a future existence. Sin itself witnesses to the high grade of our endowments, and to the sacredness of our moral obligations. The consciousness of sin is anticipative of a future state of retribution. The many instances of unpunished sin in the present life unerringly point to such a future state. The divine equity confirms the anticipation of the awakened conscience.

It may be said, in the way of objection to the views above presented, that in the light of Scripture a future existence opens to the evil no opportunity for a perfected intellectual and moral life. This fact, however, cannot invalidate the inference of such an existence from the intellectual and moral endowments of the soul, as above stated. It is simply a case of the forfeiture of great opportunities. There is such a possibility in our responsible life. Moral freedom is inseparable from such a life; and the possibility of such forfeiture is inseparable from our freedom.

The common aspiration for immortality is strong and persistent through all stages and conditions of life. Nothing can repress it except the hopeless sense of an unrecoverable forfeiture of future well-being. The truer and nobler the moral life, the clearer and wider the sweep of spiritual vision, the nearer the approach to God and truth, the closer the assimilation to the divine, the intenser is the longing for immortality. This longing must be a divine implanting in the soul, and hence cannot be a delusion. God must intend its satisfaction in a future existence.

A future existence is the common faith of mankind. The notion of that existence is often obscure; still it is everywhere present and persistent. There must be a sufficient reason for such a belief. It must be either an instinctive faith, or an intuition of the reason, or an inheritance from an original revela-

FACT OF SIN.  
NOTICE OF AN  
OBJECTION.  
DESIRE FOR  
IMMORTALITY.  
THE COMMON  
FAITH.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. vi, 10.

tion. On no other ground can its universality be explained. But from whichever, it must be from God in a manner which makes it an expression of his purpose of our immortality.

The value of faith in immortality evinces its objective truth. We all need its practical influence. Society needs it. VALUE OF THE The state needs it. Without this faith the motives of a FAITH. true and good life are infinitely lowered. The true worth of man departs. There is no longer any sphere for that practical faith which may inspire and sustain any high endeavor either for one's own moral good or for the good of others. The noblest characters of history, the statesmen of the loftiest patriotism, the philanthropists of abounding charities, have been the creation of a faith in immortality. The benevolent enterprises which bless so many, the charities so opulent in grateful ministries, have the same inspiration. The pre-eminent beneficences of Christianity evince the power of this faith. "Lucian, the universal scoffer, saw in Christianity only one of the numberless follies of his time. His mocking spirit, while contemning all religions, sobered into candor by acknowledging the benevolence of the Christians, and he testifies to the power of their belief in immortality to keep them steadfast, and cause them to abound in all helpfulness and kindness."<sup>1</sup> How is this? Are we so constituted that faith in a delusion is necessary to all that is truest and best in human life? It cannot be. Hence our immortality must be divinely purposed, and therefore must be a truth.

There are few texts of Scripture in which our immortality is directly asserted; yet its truth is ever present in both THE VIEW OF Testaments, but with the clearer unfolding in the SCRIPTURE. New.<sup>2</sup> Without the truth of immortality the deepest, divinest verities of Christianity must be denied. No place can remain for a divine incarnation in the person of the Son of God, or for an atonement for sin in the voluntary sacrifice of himself. If we are to perish utterly in the event of death we need no salvation from a future wrath, no Saviour who shall bring us to future blessedness. Hence it is that the central truths of our Christian soteriology mean the immortality of the soul.

Plato: *Phædon, or the Immortality of the Soul*; Butler: *Of a Future Life, Analogy*, part i, chap. i; Addison: *Immateriality of the Soul*, "Spectator," No. 111; Channing: *Immortality*, Works, vol. iv, pp. 169-182; Drew: *Immateriality and Immortality of the Human Soul*; Perowne: *Immortality*, Hulsean Lectures, 1868; Paine: *Soul and Instinct, Physiologically Distinguished from Materialism*; Lee: *The Immortality of the Soul*; Nordhoff: *God and the Future Life*; Foster: *Beyond the Grave*.

<sup>1</sup> Bennett: *Christian Archæology*, p. 434.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. i, 10.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

THE question of an intermediate state concerns the condition of the dead between death and the resurrection. There is no place for such a question in religions which know nothing of the resurrection or the judgment. It is not clear that the Jews, particularly in their earlier history, possessed these truths in a manner to give them any definite view of such a state. Such may have been the case with the specially enlightened, but could hardly have been so with the mass of the people. There is, however, an open place for such a question in Christianity. As the resurrection and final judgment of the dead are therein clearly set forth, so the state of souls during the interval between death and these epochal events is properly viewed as an intermediate state. The peculiarities of a disembodied existence of souls constitute it such a state.

## I. QUESTION OF AN INTERMEDIATE PLACE.

This is the question whether the souls of the dead go at once to the places of final destiny, or to a place distinct therefrom, where they remain until the resurrection.

1. *In the View of the Scriptures.*—We find no clear light upon this subject in the Old Testament. Therein the place of the dead is usually designated by the term שֵׁאוֹל—sheol, rendered ᾗδης—hades—in the Septuagint. Hades is used in the New Testament in much the same sense as sheol in the Old. In our version of the Scriptures both words are mostly rendered hell. Sheol means a dark under-world. In the popular thought of the Jews it was located somewhere in or under the earth, and was the common receptacle of the dead without respect to any distinction of character, but divided into two compartments: one, a place of happiness for the good; the other, a place of misery for the evil. It is not clear that in the popular thought of the Jews, particularly in their earlier history, there was any other place of future destiny. However, such a fact could have no doctrinal significance, for they were not an inspired people, and hence could err

just as Christian people do, and even more readily, as they had a less perfect revelation. It need not be questioned that the Old Testament contains the idea of a higher place of destiny for the good than sheol represents, nor that some minds attained to this idea; but such a fact is entirely consistent with an intermediate place, and therefore means nothing against it. It is apparent in the New Testament, and quite clear in the words of Josephus,<sup>1</sup> that in the time of our Lord the Jews, many of them at least, believed in the resurrection and the judgment, but they might still believe, or believe not, that the dead remained in an intermediate place until they went to the places of final destiny. Hence nothing yet appears that is at all clear or decisive respecting the real question of an intermediate place.

A HIGHER  
PLACE FOR  
THE GOOD.

Even in the eschatology of the New Testament we find nothing decisive on this question. Most that we notice herein has respect to the good. That there is for them a higher place of destiny than either sheol or hades represents is most certain; but this fact is entirely consistent with an intermediate place, and therefore decides nothing.

NEW TESTA-  
MENT VIEW

The case of Lazarus seems to favor the view of an intermediate place, as we can hardly think the bosom of Abraham, to which he was taken, is the true heaven of the good.<sup>2</sup> The same is true of the words of our Lord to the dying thief: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."<sup>3</sup> In some of its uses paradise has a lower meaning than the true heaven; besides, Christ did not ascend to the latter on that day. Other texts, however, seem to favor the opposite view; that is, that the good go at once to the true heaven. In his dying vision Stephen saw heaven open, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and he died, calling upon God, and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."<sup>4</sup> The answer to this prayer seems to mean his immediate reception into the true heaven. In the view of Paul, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord;<sup>5</sup> that is, when the good die they go at once to be with Christ. And as he is surely in the true heaven, seemingly these words oppose the view of an intermediate place for the good. We have thus presented the two sides of the question; and so we leave it without any concern for the result; for it is without practical interest.

SUGGESTIVE  
FACTS.

OTHER SUG-  
GESTIONS.

2. *In the Faith of the Church.*—In the earlier history of the Church the doctrine of an intermediate place was widely held. This was very natural to the circumstances. On the other hand,

<sup>1</sup> Discourse on Hades.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xvi, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xxiii, 43.

<sup>4</sup> Acts vii, 55-60.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Cor. v, 8.

the minds of both Jewish and Gentile converts were very fully prepossessed with the idea of the under-world as the place of disembodied spirits ; on the other, it was clear to them that the Scriptures reveal a higher and more glorious world as the place of blessedness after the resurrection. The doctrine of an intermediate place was the natural result of these facts. In later times the Romanist doctrine of purgatory strongly supported the same view. But the Churches of the Reformation rejected it ; and their strong revolt from the doctrine of purgatory probably had some influence in the determination of their action. Since then the Protestant Churches have mostly rejected the doctrine of an intermediate place.

## II. A STATE OF CONSCIOUS EXISTENCE.

1. *The Common Christian Faith.*—That the intermediate state is one of conscious existence has been the common Christian faith. Exceptions have been so rare that they scarcely require notice. It is difficult to see how there could be any in the case of such as accept the authority of the Scriptures : so clear is their testimony to the truth of such an existence.

At the present time, however, some maintain the cessation of our personal existence in the event of death. Many of the advocates of this view are materialists, and maintain their doctrine on materialistic ground. On such ground we are held to be naturally mortal in our whole being ; hence an extinction of our personal or conscious life is the immediate consequence of death. It follows that the future life which the Scriptures reveal is the gift of God through Christ. Such it is, not only as a state of blessedness, but also as a conscious existence. But this gift is denied to the wicked ; therefore there is for them no future existence. Such as hold the resurrection of the wicked equally deny their immortality. The view is that they are raised up, not for an abiding existence, but for a speedy doom of annihilation. The doctrine is maintained in opposition to the doctrine of future punishment.

We have already shown the falsity of materialism, and therefore need no further refutation of this doctrine, so far as it is based on such ground. And so far as it assumes the support of the Scriptures it is easily refuted by a presentation of texts which clearly mean the consciousness of the soul in the intermediate state.

2. *The Clear Sense of Scripture.*—We first adduce a few texts from the Old Testament in support of the view here maintained.

Here are the words of God to Moses : " I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."<sup>1</sup> He says, not that I was their God when they were living, nor that I shall be such after their resurrection, but, I am their God. Such, however, he could not be if they were out of conscious existence. An unconscious state in them must have debarred the divine relation which the words mean. This is manifest in our Lord's comment upon them : " He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living."<sup>2</sup> This clearly means the conscious existence of disembodied spirits.

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

MOSES.

PSALMIST.

In a season of deep mental perplexity and trouble the Psalmist finds comfort in God : " My flesh and my heart faileth : but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."<sup>3</sup> Such a faith apprehends no mental extinction in death.

SOLOMON.

" Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was : and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."<sup>4</sup> If materialism be true the whole man must perish in death, and there can be no ground for any such distinction between the body and the spirit as this text makes. Nor could it be said that the spirit returns to God in the event of death if its conscious life then perishes.

ISAIAH.

In very bold words Isaiah pictures the downfall and death of Nebuchadnezzar, and his greeting in sheol by the royal tyrants who had fallen and gone down thither before him.<sup>5</sup> No license of rhetorical figure could allow such picturing by a sacred writer who did not believe in the conscious existence of disembodied spirits. Indeed, if there be not such an existence the whole representation was false to the truth, and gave support to the popular faith which was false.

" And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul."<sup>6</sup> But if there is no conscious existence in the disembodied state, to kill the body is to kill the soul also. Yet while man can kill the body he is powerless to kill the soul. The appearance of Moses and Elias in the scene of the transfiguration is conclusive of the conscious state of the dead.<sup>7</sup> On the denial of such a state there is no interpretation of the words of our Lord to the Sadducees.<sup>8</sup> The parable of the rich man and Lazarus means the conscious existence of disembodied spirits.<sup>9</sup> Such, too, is the meaning of the words of our Lord to the dying thief : " To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."<sup>10</sup> When dying Stephen prayed,

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

GOSPELS.

ACTS.

<sup>1</sup> Exod. iii, 6.<sup>2</sup> Mark xii, 27.<sup>3</sup> Psa. lxxiii, 26.<sup>4</sup> Ecces. xii, 7.<sup>5</sup> Isa. xiv, 9-12.<sup>6</sup> Matt. x, 28.<sup>7</sup> Matt. xvii, 3.<sup>8</sup> Mark xii, 24-27.<sup>9</sup> Luke xvi, 19-23.<sup>10</sup> Luke xxiii, 43.

“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,”<sup>1</sup> it was in no thought of an immediate state of extinction, but in the full assurance of an immediate entrance into a happy life. In the view of

EPISTLES.

Paul, to be absent from the body, as in the state of death, is to be present with the Lord.<sup>2</sup> But to be thus present with the Lord is certainly to be in a conscious state: “For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.”<sup>3</sup> But Paul could not think an unconscious state better than the present life in the service of Christ;

hence he must have thought the intermediate state to be one of conscious existence. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth;”<sup>4</sup> that is, from the time of their death. This is the truth of a conscious state of disembodied spirits.

REVELATION.

3. *Review of Objections.*—One objection is based on texts which set forth death as the termination of all mental activity or knowledge. There are texts according to which the dead know not any thing; the same thing befalleth man and beast; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; so that man hath no pre-eminence above a beast.<sup>5</sup> Such texts are easily and properly interpreted on the ground that they describe the state of the dead simply in its relation to the present life. In this sense there is a complete ending of human life. Any interpretation which renders these texts inconsistent with our personal consciousness in the intermediate state must render them equally inconsistent with any and all future existence. There is no need thus to place them in contradiction to the pervasive sense of the Scriptures.

It is objected that such a conscious state is an impossibility. First of all, this objection is based on the ground of materialism; but, as that ground is false, so far it is nugatory. In another view, much may be said against the possibility of a conscious mental life in a disembodied state, since the present conditions of such a life cannot there exist; but all that can really be meant is, that we are ignorant of the modes of mental activity in that state. In truth, we are equally ignorant of the modes of such activity in the present life. Familiarity with the facts of such activities means nothing as to a knowledge of their modes. Indeed, the idea of the mental life of an unbodied spirit is no more a mystery for our thought than the idea of such a life in an embodied spirit. Hence this objection, which depends wholly upon the limitation of our knowledge, is utterly groundless. No

ASSUMED IM-  
POSSIBILITY.

<sup>1</sup> Acts vii, 59.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. v, 6-8.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. i, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. xiv, 13.

<sup>5</sup> Job xiv, 10; Psa. xlix, 12; Eccles. iii, 18-21.



philosophy within our reach can deny the possibility of a conscious life in the intermediate state.

Some who hold the consciousness of the soul in the intermediate state reduce its mental life to very narrow limits, for the reason that it is deprived of the organs of sense-perception, and therefore of all the forms of knowledge thus rendered possible. We have no warrant for the assumption of such limitation, because we know nothing of the capabilities, certainly nothing against the large capabilities, of knowledge in an unbodied spirit. The angels are without corporeity; yet we do not think of them as limited to a very narrow mental life. Indeed, theirs is a very large mental life. No doubt such is the possibility, and such the actuality, of the life of the soul in the intermediate state.

### III. NOT A PROBATIONARY STATE.

1. *Significant Silence of Scripture.*—The Scriptures make no announcement of any probation after the present life. The merest suggestion of such a state is all that may reasonably be claimed; and rarely is any thing more actually claimed. As to any explicit utterance in favor of a second probation, there is a dead silence of the Scriptures. How is this? Probation, with its privileges and responsibilities, very deeply concerns us. No period of our existence is fraught with deeper interest. The Scriptures are replete with such views of our present probation. They constantly press it upon our attention as involving the most solemn responsibilities of the present life and the profoundest interests of the future life. In a future probation there must be a renewal of all that so deeply concerns a present probation; yet there is not an explicit word respecting it. Such silence of the Scriptures is utterly irreconcilable with the reality of such a probation.

2. *Clear Sense of Scripture.*—The urgency with which the Scriptures press the importance of improving the present opportunities of salvation deny us all hope of a future probation. A few texts will make this position fearfully sure: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."<sup>1</sup> "The night cometh, when no man can work."<sup>2</sup> "Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light, believe in

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. ix, 10.

<sup>2</sup> John ix, 4.

the light, that ye may be the children of light.”<sup>1</sup> “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?”<sup>2</sup> The many texts which assure us of salvation on our repentance and faith, but either directly or by implication deny it to us on the refusal or neglect of such terms, equally affirm the same truth. It suffices that we give a few by reference.<sup>3</sup>

The deeds for which we shall render an account at the judgment, and according to which our destiny shall be determined, are deeds of the present life. There is not the slightest reference to any other. Many texts might easily be cited in proof of these statements. However, they are so surely true that one may suffice: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”<sup>4</sup> If there be a future probation we would rationally think of it as continuing until the final judgment. On every reasonable view of it, the responsible deeds of the great majority of mankind would be incalculably more numerous therein than such deeds of the present life. Yet in all the texts which set forth the final judgment, many of which are very specific as to the deeds for which account shall be rendered, there is not the slightest reference to any other deeds than those of the present life. This fact is most conclusive against a second probation.

3. *The Question Respecting the Heathen.*—A second probation is specially maintained in behalf of the heathen. Much that is plausible may be said in support of this view; and the more as against any doctrine or system of doctrines which denies the possibility of their salvation. We have no responsible part in any such issue, as we hold no such doctrine. The question before us is, not the reasons which may be urged in favor of a future probation of the heathen, but the sense of the Scriptures respecting such a probation.

In the light of the Scriptures there is a distinction between the heathen and such as have the law of God in the form of a divine revelation, and between those under the Jewish economy and those under the Christian, as it respects the degree of guilt and the severity of future punishment.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John xii, 35, 36. <sup>2</sup> Heb. ii, 1-3. <sup>3</sup> Mark xvi, 15, 16; John iii, 14-16, 18, 36.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v, 10. <sup>5</sup> Luke xii, 47, 48; Rom. ii, 12; Heb. xii, 25.

There is, however, no distinction as it respects their amenability to the same judgment for the deeds of the present life, A COMMON AMENABILITY. or the determination of their final destiny according to the same. On these points the words of St. Paul are most explicit. In the first place, he sets forth a moral responsibility under the light of nature.<sup>1</sup> That such is his meaning is perfectly clear in the passage given by reference. Then we have his declaration of the divine equity in the judgment and destiny of men, without any distinction as between Jew and Gentile.<sup>2</sup> And finally we have these explicit words: "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel."<sup>3</sup> Such is clearly the doctrine of St. Paul, and it is impossible to read into his words the meaning of a second probation for the heathen world.

The facts above presented are so conclusive against the assumption of a future probation that opposing texts, for which nothing more can reasonably be claimed than the suggestion of such a probation, are without weight in the issue. This is true of the text respecting the sin against the Holy Ghost.<sup>4</sup> Only THE UNPARDONABLE SIN. a part of it need be cited: "But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." It is assumed that these words imply a possible forgiveness of all sins in a future state, except the specified sin of blasphemy. Surely this is slender ground on which to base a future probation. The words, "neither in the world to come," may mean, not a future state in distinction from the present, but simply the absolute irremissibility of the one specified sin. Further, any interpretation of the text in BEARINGS OF THE CASE. favor of a future probation must concede it the meaning of eternal punishment—the very doctrine against which such probation is maintained. And who knows how many finally commit the sin that never hath forgiveness? If it is true that some think this a very rare sin, it is equally true that others think it very common with the finally incorrigible; so that the promise of gain is not enough to justify the assumption of a future probation on such slight ground.

The ground is equally slight in the text wherein it is said that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison.<sup>5</sup> Some of the best commentators say that the words, "he went and preached,"

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i, 18-21.<sup>2</sup> Rom. ii, 6-11.<sup>3</sup> Rom. ii, 12-16.<sup>4</sup> Matt. xii, 31, 32.<sup>5</sup> 1 Pet. iii, 18-20.

mean simply, he preached. But how? Not in person, but by the Spirit. And to whom? To those who were disobedient in the time of Noah. It may have been then that Christ preached to them by the Spirit, either through his strivings with them<sup>1</sup> or in the preaching of Noah.<sup>2</sup> Hence the assumption that Christ went and preached in hades has slight warrant in this text. That he there preached the Gospel has no warrant. Further, the narrow limits of this preaching, whatever or wherever it was, allows no ground for the assumption of a common preaching of the Gospel to the spirits of the dead. Indeed, the obscurity of the text and the uncertainty of its meaning, which appear in the diversities of its interpretation, allow it no doctrinal weight in favor of a future probation.

4. *Not a Purgatorial State.*—Purgatory, as an assumed Christian doctrine, is peculiar to Romanism. It has no place in the creed of any other Church, though in some it may be held by individual members. In Romanism Christians compose two classes: the imperfect, and the truly good. The former have impurities which must be cleansed away, and venial sins which must be expiated in penal suffering, in order to a meetness for heaven. Even the truly good, while free from the guilt of mortal sins, yet have deserts of temporal punishment which must be expiated. Purgatory provides for both classes, as in its penal and purifying fires both may attain to a fitness for heaven. But it provides only for such as the Romish Church recognizes as Christians; therefore it has no connection with the doctrine of a second probation.

It is a part of the doctrine that purgatory is in some respects subject to the Church. By prayers, and alms, and masses its penal sufferings may be mitigated or the hour of release hastened. The doctrine has been a fruitful source of revenue; a mighty power of oppression and extortion that has not remained unused. Hardly any other doctrine has such proportion or such potency in the Papal system. Yet there is but slight pretension to any Scripture ground of the doctrine. Indeed, there is no such ground. It may be found in Homer, and Plato, and Virgil, and other classical writers, but not in the Scriptures. It was unknown to the early Church; assumed no definite form until late in the fourth century; and was first decreed as an article of faith by the Council of Florence in the fifteenth century. The doctrine is openly false to the soteriology of the Gospel, according to which we are saved,

THE SPIRITS IN  
PRISON.

THE DOCTRINE.

IN THE HANDS  
OF THE  
CHURCH.

GROUNDLESS.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. vi, 3.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. ii, 5.

completely saved, from the guilt and pollution of sin through the blood of Christ and the sanctification of the Spirit.

Hobart : *The State of the Departed* ; Brown : *The Dead in Christ, their State, Present and Future* ; Wightman : *The Undying Soul and the Intermediate State* ; West : *The State of the Dead* ; Whately : *A View of Scripture Revelation Concerning a Future State* ; Bush : *The Intermediate State*, etc. ; Merrill : *The New Testament Idea of Hell* ; Townsend : *The Intermediate World* ; Cremer : *Beyond the Grave* ; Fyfe : *The Hereafter : Sheol, Hades, etc.* ; Bickersteth : *Hades and Heaven* ; Huidekoper : *Christ's Mission to the Underworld* ; Wright : *Relation of Death to Probation* ; Craven : *Excursus in Lange on Revelation*, Am. ed., 1874, pp. 364-377 ; Dorner : *System of Christian Doctrine*, vol. iv, pp. 373-434.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE SECOND ADVENT.

THERE was a first advent of Christ, when he came as the Messiah. That coming was in the mode of an incarnation, in order to the redemption of the world. There is another coming of Christ which, in distinction from the first, we call the second advent. Its prominence in the Scriptures and in Christian thought justifies such designation.

## I. DOCTRINE OF THE ADVENT.

The doctrine of the advent is concerned with the manner of Christ's second coming—whether it will be personal and visible or merely in a spiritual or providential mode; also with the time of his coming, particularly whether it shall be premillennial or post-millennial. The last question must be determined in view of the concomitants of the advent.

1. *A Personal, Visible Coming of Christ.*—There are some signs of a present tendency of thought away from the traditional doctrine of a personal, visible advent, in favor of a merely spiritual or providential manifestation. The prevalence of the new view would carry with it a recasting of the traditional doctrines of the general resurrection and the final judgment, or, rather, the elimination of these doctrines. We see no sufficient reason for the acceptance of this view, and therefore adhere to the manner of the advent so long held in the faith of the Church. That the Scriptures set forth the coming of Christ as in a personal, visible manner can hardly be questioned. Indeed, such expression of it seems so definite and clear as to leave no place for the opposing view. A few texts will suffice for the presentation of this point.

We have the deep words of Christ respecting his going to prepare a place for his disciples and his coming again to receive them unto himself: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."<sup>1</sup> These words are clear in themselves, and clear beyond question when read in the light of the ascension of

<sup>1</sup> John xiv, 2, 3.

Christ and the promise of his coming again : “ Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”<sup>1</sup> Here are the very going and coming again which Christ promised in the text before cited. His going was personal and visible, and the promise is that his coming again shall be in like manner.

The long-hidden purpose of God respecting the redemption of the world “ is now made manifest by the appearing—*τῆς ἐπιφάνειας*—of our Saviour Jesus Christ,”<sup>2</sup> which certainly was a personal, visible coming. Then why shall not the “ appearing—*ἐπιφάνειαν*—of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,”<sup>3</sup> for which we look, be personal and visible ? Many such texts might be adduced, but it will suffice that we add a few simply by reference.<sup>4</sup> If such texts are in themselves less explicit than some above cited, yet when read in the light of the former, as they should be, they clearly mean the same manner of the coming of Christ.

A point is sometimes made on the meaning of *parousia*—*παρουσία*, from *παρεῖναι*—a word not rarely rendered in the sense of the coming of Christ. The point is, that the word means simply to be present with, not any act of coming. That it means to be present with is manifest in its composition, but that it means only this is contrary to fact. It is not rarely used in the sense of coming and arriving. There are instances in which such must be its meaning.<sup>5</sup> So there are uses of the word in application to Christ which must mean more than his presence with us ; indeed, must mean his personal coming to us in order to his presence with us.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps the full meaning of the word in such use is a personal coming of Christ to be abidingly present with his people. And this accords strictly with the meaning of various texts which set forth his coming ;<sup>7</sup> but we can no more eliminate from the word the meaning of his personal coming to us than that of his presence with us.

2. *Theory of a Merely Figurative Sense.*—A figurative sense of the second advent is opposed to the literal sense ; that is, it denies a literal coming of Christ, and limits the whole account of it to the meaning of some purely spiritual work or specially providential

<sup>1</sup> Acts i, 11.<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. i, 10.<sup>3</sup> Tit. ii, 13.<sup>4</sup> Phil. iii, 20 ; 1 Thess. i, 10 ; iv, 15, 16 ; 2 Thess. i, 7, 10 ; 1 Pet. i, 7.<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. xvi, 17 ; 2 Cor. vii, 6, 7 ; 2 Pet. iii, 12.<sup>6</sup> 1 Thess. iv, 15-17 ; James v, 8 ; 2 Pet. iii, 4.<sup>7</sup> John xiv, 2, 3 ; 1 Thess. iv, 15-17.

interposition in the history of the Church. This was the position of a type of Universalism which, fifty years ago, was strong enough in some parts of our own country to make itself known. There is much less of it now. As this school denied all future punishment it was compelled to deny the traditional view of the second advent. The contention against it was based largely on the discourse of our Lord respecting the destruction of the temple.<sup>1</sup> The endeavor was to find therein, together with the destruction of Jerusalem, the fulfillment of all that the Scriptures say respecting the second advent. At the present time some who have no sympathy with such a type of Universalism, nor indeed with any other, yet hold the same narrow view respecting the subject of that notable discourse. Such may consistently believe in other comings of Christ, and even in a final coming; but after a figurative interpretation of that discourse, so far as it relates to the coming of Christ, they may so interpret all that the Scriptures say elsewhere respecting his second coming, and thus deny a personal, visible advent.

The interpretation of that discourse on the ground of a literal advent is not without difficulty; but a theory which must interpret all that the Scriptures say upon the subject in a figurative sense involves much greater difficulty. This may be seen in the light of the evidences of a literal advent already adduced.

Respecting the discourse of our Lord, a central point of the issue lies in these words: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."<sup>2</sup> In the preceding part the coming of Christ is set forth in such forms of expression as the Scriptures elsewhere employ in setting forth the final advent. The following points are then made: That coming of Christ occurred in the time of the generation then living, the proof of which is in the words above cited; that coming was purely figurative in its mode, not in any sense literal; therefore, all that the Scriptures say respecting the final advent may be interpreted in a like figurative manner. Two points are made in behalf of a literal sense of the final advent. The first assumes a double sense of our Lord's prophetic utterances, or a blending of the consummation of the world's history with the destruction of the temple and the consummation of the Jewish economy. The second assumes that the word generation, as used in the above citation, means the Jewish race, not the Jews then living. Hence, as this race still exists and may exist even to the

GROUND OF  
THE THEORY.

OPPLEXITY.

OUR LORD'S  
DISCOURSE.

POINTS IN  
ISSUE.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv, xxv.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv, 34.



end of time, the coming of our Lord, which he sets forth, would not be separated from his final advent, but would remain one with it. Much may be said against both of these points, but we think them less objectionable than any theory which requires the interpretation of all the Scriptures say respecting the second advent in a purely figurative sense. Stock or race is a fully recognized meaning of the original word, *γενεά*, in both its classical and biblical uses. The continuance of this race, despite its dispersions and tribulations, is one of the wonders of human history, and might well have been included in the subjects of our Lord's far-reaching prophecies.

3. *The Premillennial Theory.*—The theory is that Christ will come personally at the inception of the millennium and reign on earth for a thousand years. Such is the central assumption, and so far there is much unity of THE THEORY. faith among premillennialists, while on subordinate points there are many diversities of view. Some think that the martyrs will be raised at this advent, and will reign with Christ; others, that all the saints will then be raised, that they may share in the glory of his kingdom. This advent will inaugurate the millennial life of the Church, and this reign will be the chief agency through which the triumph of Christianity shall be achieved. Our concern, however, is specially, almost wholly, with the question of a premillennial advent.

The chief reliance of the theory is upon a single passage of Scripture.<sup>1</sup> This may be said, first, that the passage SCRIPTURE GROUND. contains not a word respecting any advent of Christ, nor a word respecting his reigning personally on the earth. Further, it is in a highly figurative or symbolical book, and is itself highly symbolical. Consequently the construction of a theory of the advent on such ground is without the warrant of any principle of doctrinal formation, and the more certainly so as there are many explicit texts on that subject. So far as the passage relates to the resurrection, it will be considered in our treatment of that question.

## II. THE ADVENT IN THE LIGHT OF ITS CONCOMITANTS.

By the concomitants of the advent we mean the great facts of eschatology which shall be cotemporary with it or immediately follow it.

1. *The General Resurrection.*—The Scriptures place the coming of Christ in close time-relation with the resurrection. "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xx, 1-6.

voice, and shall come forth."<sup>1</sup> These are the words of Christ himself. It is true that they do not formally name his advent, but they clearly imply it. He had just declared himself invested with the power of judgment, the final and supreme exercise of which is frequently set forth in connection with his advent. Further, that the dead shall hear his voice associates the resurrection with his advent. This is a general resurrection in the fullest sense of the term. Some texts set forth the resurrection of the righteous only, but in the most general sense, and formally associate it with the coming of Christ.<sup>2</sup> That the wicked rise at the same time is made certain by the words of Christ above cited; so that we still have a general resurrection in connection with his coming. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."<sup>3</sup> The dead must be raised prior to their judgment; and the text properly means all the dead. These facts place the general resurrection in close connection with the coming of Christ.

2. *The Final Judgment.*—It is a truth of the Scriptures that Christ shall finally judge the human race: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."<sup>4</sup> "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained."<sup>5</sup> "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ."<sup>6</sup>

A few texts will suffice to show the coincidence of the final judgment with the second advent. We first adduce the closing paragraph of that notable discourse of our Lord which began with the destruction of the temple.<sup>7</sup> The citation may be omitted, since the facts which it sets forth are familiar. The passage is too broad in its scope for any limitation to the destruction of Jerusalem. There is the coming of Christ in his glory, with all the holy angels; the gathering of all nations before him; the judgment of all; the final destinies of all. No events in the destruction of Jerusalem could fulfill the scope of these facts. That fulfillment is possible only with the final advent of our Lord and the judgment of mankind. Hence the passage places these events in close connection. The same is true of a similar text, in which there is a like judgment of men at the coming of Christ, and a punishment of the wicked when he shall come

<sup>1</sup> John v, 28, 29.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 22, 23; 1 Thess. iv, 15-17.<sup>3</sup> 2 Tim. iv, 1.<sup>4</sup> John v, 22.<sup>5</sup> Acts xvii, 31.<sup>6</sup> 2 Cor. v, 10.<sup>7</sup> Matt. xxv, 31-43.

to be glorified in his saints.<sup>1</sup> A text before cited in proof of the time-association of the resurrection with the second advent equally proves such association of the final judgment: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."<sup>2</sup> The quick mean all who shall be living at the time of the advent, and the dead, all who have previously died. Hence the text sets forth the final judgment as a concomitant of the second advent.

3. *The End of the World.*—The second advent will be in the consummation of the world's history. "But this man, CLOSE TO THE after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat ADVENT. down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."<sup>3</sup> This text surely means that Christ will administer the affairs of his kingdom, even to the end, from his throne in heaven; and this fact places his advent at the end of the world. "Whom the heaven must receive, until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began."<sup>4</sup> These words mean that Christ shall remain in heaven until the fulfillment of all the prophecies; and this fulfillment will not be complete until the consummation of the world's history. Thus again the second advent is placed at the end of the world.

The same fact is made plain by the words of St. Peter.<sup>5</sup> He forewarns the Church of certain scoffers who should THE WORDS OF come, saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? PETER. for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Peter answers them beforehand. They would come with the understanding that the end of the world would be coincident with the coming of Christ. Hence their objection: all things continue as they were from the beginning; there are no signs of the world's dissolution; it will abide forever; hence Christ will never come. Peter answers in two points: first, he sets forth a former destruction of the world; secondly, he declares the manner of the second destruction. In the first he corrects their mistake respecting the past; in the second, their mistake respecting the manner in which the world should come to an end. The end should come, not as the result of a gradual process of decay, as these scoffers would falsely assume, but suddenly, through the agency of fire, as the world perished before by the flood. Thus St. Peter clearly sets forth the truth,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. i, 6-10.<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. iv, 1.<sup>3</sup> Heb. x, 12, 13.<sup>4</sup> Acts iii, 21.<sup>5</sup> 2 Pet. iii, 3-10.

that the end of the world shall be concomitant with the final coming of Christ.

OTHER THE-  
ORIES DIS-  
PROVED.

The Scripture proofs of a personal advent disprove the figurative interpretation. The concomitants of the advent, which we have set forth on the ground of Scripture, forbid its limitation to any such local event as the destruction of Jerusalem. Further, they thoroughly disprove the theory of a premillennial advent. Not in any assumption of the theory shall there then be either a general resurrection of the dead, or the final judgment of mankind, or the end of the world.

OBJECTIONS TO  
PREMILLEN-  
NIAL VIEW.

This theory is not only opposed to the Scriptures, but is in itself open to serious objections. Its natural tendency is to a depreciation of existing evangelistic agencies; and consequently to discouragement, and the enervation of effort in such work. Why strive for the achievement of that for which there are no sufficient means? Why not wait for the divine efficiencies which shall accompany the personal advent and reign of Christ? Yet existing agencies are such as our Lord ordained for the achievement of this great work. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you."<sup>1</sup> "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations: . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."<sup>2</sup> Here are, at once, the divinely instituted agencies for the evangelization of the world and the divine guaranties of success. But there is no premillennial advent nor personal reign of Christ in the assuring promise of his abiding presence.

THE BETTER  
ECONOMY.

The reign of Christ from his throne in heaven, through the mission of the Spirit, is better for the Church and the accomplishment of its work than would be his personal reign on earth. He said himself: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."<sup>3</sup> What was the better then is the better now, and will be the better even to the end of time. The personal presence of Christ in Jerusalem, with the assumed splendor of his advent and throne, instead of being an organizing and energizing agency, would disorganize all existing agencies and enervate all present endeavors for the evangelization of the world. If vast multitudes once swept onward to the Orient simply to possess the empty tomb of Christ, what would be the movement thither if he were there in all the glory of his personal reign? The social order of the

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv, 49.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxviii, 19, 20.

<sup>3</sup> John xvi, 7.

world would be deeply disturbed, while the interests of Christianity would suffer very serious detriment.

Pearson : *Exposition of the Creed*, article vii ; Brown : *The Second Advent* ; Carson : *The Personal Reign of Christ During the Millennium Proved to be Impossible* ; Merrill : *The Second Coming of Christ* ; Liddon : *The Two Comings of Our Lord* ; Cunningham : *The Second Advent of Christ* ; Lee : *Scripture Doctrine of the Coming of Our Lord* ; Duffield : *The Prophecies Relative to the Second Coming of Christ* ; Bonar : *The Coming and the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus* ; Lord : *The Coming and Reign of Christ* ; Warren : *The Parousia*.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE RESURRECTION.

THAT the Scriptures declare a resurrection of the dead is too plain a fact to be questioned ; hence it is needless to maintain such a proposition. The meaning of the Scriptures in such declaration is the real question of the resurrection. That meaning must be found in the interpretation of the appropriate texts. Therein lies the truth of the question.

## I. DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION.

1. *The Sense of the Scriptures.*—We may first state the doctrine, and then show that it gives the true sense of the Scriptures.

The body in which we die shall be the subject of the resurrection.

THE BODY  
RAISED. If it is not such in some proper sense there is no resurrection of the body. So far the statement is general, and may admit some qualification. There is an absolute identity of the body, and there is a proper identity. The former requires every atom of which it is composed at any given time ; the latter is consistent with less, even with much less, than the whole, just as a proper identity is consistent with the changes to which it is subject in the present life. When we say that the body in which we die shall be the subject of the resurrection we mean in the sense of a proper identity, not in that of an absolute identity. The Scriptures do not affirm a resurrection in the latter sense ; nor can we affirm the necessity of every atom to the constitution of the resurrection body. For aught we know, far less than the whole will suffice for such body.

ONLY PROOF  
OF THE RESUR-  
RECTION. There is no proof of such a doctrine of the resurrection except in the Scriptures. It cannot be proved through primary assumptions which imply or require it, though such mode of proof is often attempted. For instance, it is assumed that a body is necessary to the future life of the soul. In truth, we have no philosophy which warrants any such affirmation ; much less, that such body must consist of the very matter of our present body. This matter is not peculiar to our body, but is common to the organic realm, and to the world in which we live and die, and for aught we know any other portion

FALSE ASSUMP-  
TIONS.

would answer just as well for all the requirements of the future body. It is assumed that character is expressed through the body, and hence that the resurrection body must be the same in order to such expression in the future state. Now, granting all that is assumed respecting the expression of character in the present life, certainly that expression is not from the mere matter of the body, but from its physiological cast, or, more truly, from the inner life of the soul. But the resurrection body shall not have a physiological constitution ; and, even if it should, any other matter would answer for the required form just as well as that which composes the body in the present life. Again, it is assumed that the body shares in the deeds of the present life, and therefore should share in the retributions of the future life. In truth, the body has no responsible part in the deeds of the present life. It is only from mental confusion or an utter lack of discrimination that we ever think it has. The body, with all its members, is purely instrumental to the agency of the personal mind, which is the only responsible subject. That we may see the more clearly the utter groundlessness of the present assumption, let us think of the moldered dust of a human body, and then try to think of it as a responsible sharer in the deeds of this life and as rewardable for the same in the future life. The future body may affect the consciousness of the soul, and so far may concern its destiny, but can have no other part therein. Nor could there be any peculiar effect from a body composed of the matter of the former body ; the effect would be the very same from a body composed of other matter.

THE BODY NO  
RESPONSIBLE  
AGENCY.

Sentiment joins with assumption in such proof of a literal resurrection. We would see again and know the friends we have loved and lost ; hence there must be such a resurrection. The sentiment we deeply respect, but must think the inference utterly invalid. Our point is not against the future recognition, but against the assumed necessity to it. There is no such necessity in the identity of the resurrection body with the substance of the present body. We meet and recognize a friend after a separation of ten or twenty years, in which the whole substance of his body has been changed. It follows that the mere matter of the body has nothing to do with the recognition, the ground of which is in the physiological cast and the outward expression of the inner life. Whatever be the provisions for future recognitions, of which we know nothing, certainly they are just as possible on the ground of other matter as on that of the present body.

MISLEADING  
SENTIMENT.

The reason of these criticisms seems obvious. It is not wise to build any doctrine on fallacious grounds. This is specially true of such a doctrine as the resurrection, respecting which AIM OF THE CRITICISMS. there is a strong tendency to skepticism. The false grounds are sure to be detected, and then the doctrine is cast aside with them. Its true and only ground is in the Scriptures. That the reason for the resurrection is not open to our intelligence cannot disprove it. There may still be a sufficient reason. Indeed, there must be such a reason, if the resurrection of the body be a truth of the Scriptures. Whether it be such a truth must be determined by a study of the appropriate texts. Nor need we study a great many; for if the doctrine cannot be found in a few neither can it in the many.

We first adduce the words of our Lord: “Marvel not at this: WORDS OF OUR LORD. for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.”<sup>1</sup> The reflexive reference is specially to verses 21 and 25, wherein he speaks of raising the dead: perhaps in a spiritual manner; very clearly in a literal manner, as in the instance of Lazarus and others. This, however, should cause no surprise in view of the infinitely more stupendous work which he sets forth—the future resurrection of all the dead. The literal sense of this resurrection can hardly be questioned. The subjects of it are in the graves—*τοῖς μνημείοις*—literally, the burial places of the bodies of the dead. The souls of the dead are not in such places; hence they cannot be the subjects of this resurrection, although it be true that they shall severally resume possession of their bodies. Surely it is in the meaning of these words that the body in which we die shall be the subject of the future resurrection.

We come to the special chapter of the resurrection.<sup>2</sup> That it treats almost exclusively the resurrection of Christian believers does not in the least affect its meaning respecting the present question.

In verses 12–23 the resurrection of the dead is openly set forth and maintained. It is so connected with the resurrection of Christ that the latter is at once the pledge and sample of the former. In all this the literal sense seems obvious. Indeed, it is not apparent how the facts can have any other meaning.

In verse 35 objections are anticipated: “But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” These questions embody two objections to the resurrection: one,

<sup>1</sup> John v, 28, 29.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv.



against its possibility ; the other, against its desirability. That such are the objections seems clear in view of both the standpoint of the objector and the reply of St. Paul. OBJECTIONS ANTICIPATED. The objector is a Greek, or at least imbued with Greek thought, which denied the possibility of the resurrection. Josephus met this same objection and controverted it against the Greeks.<sup>1</sup> The second objection found an ample source in Greek thought. It is true that the Greek philosophy was not really Manichæan, but equally true that it was deeply imbued with the notion of the evil nature of matter. Hence the Greek could not think the resurrection of the body a good, but could and did object to it as a thing utterly undesirable. That such are the objections which St. Paul here anticipated will further appear in the manner of his reply.

If the objector mistook the sense of the resurrection it was in place for Paul simply to correct him. This, however, he does not do, but makes answer on the ground of a THE ANSWER. literal sense. It may be observed that the answer is not to these objections separately, but to the two together, and predominantly to the second—the one with which the literal sense of the resurrection is the more deeply concerned. The defense proceeds on the ground of the plastic nature of matter and the marvelous transformation of which it is susceptible. This is the ruling idea in the reference to vegetation, to the different kinds of flesh, and to bodies celestial and terrestrial. There is the same matter in all these widely varying forms. As matter is thus plastic in the hand of God, the body may be so refashioned in the resurrection as to be a perpetual good. Only in such a view is there either point in the anticipated objection or pertinence in the reply.

In precise accordance with the above view, St. Paul sets forth, in verses 42–44, the marvelous change of which the body shall be the subject in the resurrection : “ So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption : it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory : it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power : it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.” Such also is the subject of verses 50–53 : “ Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” The body in its present state is not fitted for the heavenly state. What then ? The mystery is opened. In the resurrection the body shall be changed from its present gross form into a form suited to the heavenly state ; and the bodies of those then living shall be changed

IN ACCORD  
WITH THE  
ANSWER.

<sup>1</sup> Discourse on Hades.

in like manner. No interpretation of this chapter seems to us possible without a recognition of the body as the subject of the resurrection. The same is true of other words of St. Paul: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."<sup>1</sup> If the body is not the subject of such transformation this text is utterly inexplicable.

2. *Speculative Theories.*—By speculative theories we mean such as are inconsistent with the resurrection of the body in any true sense of the term.

We name first the germ theory—of which Samuel Drew, an early Wesleyan of distinction, is the chief representative.<sup>2</sup> The theory assumes the existence of a germ or stamen within the human body, which is not subject to decay or dissolution as the body itself, and which at the final advent shall be expanded into the resurrection body. We have no occasion formally to controvert the theory, though it is not without favorable recognition in some recent works which professedly hold a more orthodox view. The existence of such a germ or stamen is a mere assumption. No searching has ever discovered it. Nor has the theory any support in St. Paul's reference to the process of vegetation simply in illustration of the marvelous change of which the body is susceptible. It is utterly inconsistent with the central idea of the resurrection as a transformation of the corruptible body into an incorruptible form. The theory avoids the natural difficulties which, seemingly at least, beset this doctrine, but involves more serious ones in the matter of biblical interpretation.

The Swedenborgian theory is of the same class. Professor Bush has maintained it with rare ability, but has not freed it from its purely speculative character. The theory holds that the resurrection occurs at the time of death. There is in man an essence which is of neither the body nor the spirit, but is something between them. This essence, whatever it is, goes forth with the departing spirit and immediately invests it as its future corporeity. Such is the resurrection. "*A spiritual body is developed at death. By spiritual, in this connection, we mean refined, subtle, ethereal, sublimated. By the development of a spiritual body we mean the disengagement—the extrication—of that psychical part of our nature with which vital and animal functions are, in the present life, intimately connected. . . . It is a*

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iii, 20, 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Resurrection of the Human Body.*

*tertium quid*—an intermediate something between the cogitative faculty and the gross body.”<sup>1</sup>

The theory assumes a trichotomic anthropology, and must be groundless without it. But such an anthropology is not an established truth ; and so long as it is not, such a theory of the resurrection must remain purely hypothetic. If the reality of such a third nature in man be granted there is not the slightest proof that in the event of death it emerges with the spirit and becomes its corporeal investment. Further, if all this were shown to be true it would not answer for the resurrection of the body which the Scriptures set forth. Hence the theory must be dismissed as a mere speculation.

3. *The Resurrection Body.*—While the body shall be marvelously changed in the resurrection, it shall still be material in substance. The terms “natural body” and “spiritual body”<sup>2</sup> mean simply different states, not any distinction of essence. In a word, the resurrection is a transformation, not a transubstantiation. The latter would mean a future body of the same essence as the spirit of which it shall be a corporeal investment. The incongruity of such a state of things disproves it.

The materiality of the resurrection body is entirely consistent with its immortality. The common tendency of material things to dissolution or death is wholly from their interior constitution or exterior condition, or from both. The constitution and condition may be such that both interior forces and exterior agencies shall be efficaciously operative toward the dissolution or death of the body ; but just the opposite is also possible with respect to both. Surely God can so constitute and condition the resurrection body that all interior forces and external influences shall work together for its immortality. So far the resurrection bodies of the righteous and the wicked will be without distinction, the immortality of the body being no more determinative of future destiny than the immortality of the soul.

When the Scriptures set forth the wonderful transformation of the body in the resurrection the application is ever and exclusively to the righteous. Much might be said on the nature of this change and the consequent blessedness of the future life, but nothing that could improve the presentation of the Scriptures ; and it will suffice that their inspired utterances be given simply by reference.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bush : *Anastasis*, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 44.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xx, 36 ; 1 Cor. xv, 42-54 ; Phil. iii, 21.

## II. CREDIBILITY OF THE RESURRECTION.

1. *A Divinely Purposed Futurity.*—That God purposes the resurrection of the dead is a truth which is surely grounded in the texts of Scripture which set forth such a resurrection. This fact is so plain that it needs no further treatment; and its meaning for the credibility of the resurrection is manifest. All unconditional purposes of God shall be accomplished. There is ground for a distinction between his conditional and unconditional purposes. The former are not absolute, and therefore may never be effectuated, as the conditions of their effectuation may never be met. But absolute purposes have no such conditions, and therefore must be fulfilled. No such purpose can ever meet any insuperable hinderance. The resurrection was not purposed in any oversight of its difficulties, and nothing can hinder its achievement. Therefore as a divinely purposed futurity it is thoroughly credible.

2. *Within the Plan of Redemption.*—The resurrection of the dead is as really a part of the Christian economy as the redemption of the world. This appears in its close connection with the resurrection of Christ and the implications of its denial. If the dead rise not, Christ is not risen, neither is there any salvation in him.<sup>1</sup> The completion of his mediatorial reign shall be attained only with the resurrection: “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”<sup>2</sup> These words are a part of St. Paul’s formal treatment of the resurrection, and clearly set it forth as an integral part of the Christian economy. As this economy shall not fail of its completion, so shall the dead rise again. On the ground of

COMPLETION  
OF THE PLAN.  
THE TRIUMPH  
OF CHRIST  
SIGNALIZED.

such facts the resurrection is surely credible in the view of Christian faith. We have said that, so far as we know, other matter than that of our own body would answer as well for the resurrection body. The proposition is equally true conversely. Hence it may please God that the mediatorial triumph of his Son shall be signalized by the resurrection of the body which was made subject to death on account of sin. The thorough inclusion of the resurrection within the economy of redemption is suggestive of this thought.

3. *Apparent Difficulties of the Doctrine.*—Such difficulties may be elaborately displayed, but a few words will present them in all their real strength. The body crumbles into dust, and the dust may be widely scattered. Some of it may

STATED.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 12-19.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 25, 26.

go to the nourishment of vegetation, and through it to the nourishment of animal tissue, and through either or both become incorporated in other human bodies. Further, there are instances of cannibalism, with a like result. Such are the difficulties. They center in two points: the wide dispersion of the particles which composed the living body, and the possibility that in the course of time some may belong to different bodies.

The apparent magnitude of these difficulties is far greater than the real, especially if we view them, as we should, in the light of the divine providence. The dispersion of ESTIMATED. the particles is real only in our own view. However widely scattered or deeply mingled with other matter, they remain as near to the omniscient eye and omnipotent hand of God as if placed in an imperishable urn at the foot of his throne. Nor is there any probability, even on natural grounds, that in any case so much matter could become common to two bodies as would be necessary to a proper identity of either. When we place the subject in the light of God's providence, whose purpose it is to raise the dead, all difficulties vanish.

In referring the possibility of the resurrection to the divine sufficiency we do but follow the Scriptures and the VIEW OF THE SCRIPTURES. logic of the question. Zeno pronounced the resurrection the hope of worms, and Celsus applauded him as wiser than Jesus. Pliny deemed it impossible, even to the power of God, "revocare defunctos." Philosophers falsely so called find in a fortuitous concursus of incoherent atoms, or in the potentialities of a primordial fire-mist, the original of mind and the harmonies of the universe, but declare the resurrection of the dead an impossibility. They are effectually answered in the words of our Lord: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."<sup>1</sup>

### III. ONENESS OF THE RESURRECTION.

1. *Theories of Distinct Resurrections.*—There is a premillennial theory, which holds that the martyrs, if not all the PREMILLEN- NIAL THEORY. saints, shall rise at the inception of the millennium and reign with Christ a thousand years. The ground of the theory lies chiefly in a single text.<sup>2</sup> The souls of certain martyrs appeared in the vision of John, and he said these things: "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." There is not in the text one definite word about a literal resurrection. The "first resurrection" means the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxii, 29.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xx, 4-6.

“living and reigning” of the martyrs. But they were souls in a disembodied state; therefore their living and reigning could not mean a literal resurrection. Further, such a meaning requires the premillennial advent and the personal reign of Christ; but, as we have seen, neither is a truth; therefore there is here no literal resurrection of the martyrs at the inception of the millennium.

The text is most easily interpreted on the theory of a figurative rising and reigning. The martyrs lived and reigned in the triumph of the cause for which they died. The idea of a resurrection often appears in the Scriptures in a figurative sense, and seems very natural in the intense and bold symbolism of this book. In the hour of his martyrdom John Huss proclaimed the triumph of his cause, and said: “And I, waking from among the dead, and rising, so to speak, from my grave, shall leap with great joy.” It was in the same manner of speech that Leo X. said: “The heretics, Huss and Jerome, are now alive again in the person of Martin Luther.” In glowing vision John saw the triumph of the cause for which these martyrs died, and summoned them into the triumph. This is their living and reigning; and this is their resurrection.<sup>1</sup>

Another theory holds distinct resurrections of the righteous and the wicked, though narrowly separated in time. This theory is probably quite common in popular Christian thought. It has no support in the texts upon which it mainly rests. We have first this text: “But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.”<sup>2</sup> There is here no direct reference to the wicked, and hence no distinction between their resurrection and that of the righteous. The only distinction in relation to the resurrection is between Christ and his disciples. Another text is in these words: “And the dead in Christ shall rise first.”<sup>3</sup> But neither in these words nor in the context is there any reference to the resurrection of the wicked; hence there is no time-distinction between it and that of the righteous. The context makes obvious the real point of distinction. It is between the resurrection of the dead and the ascension of the living to meet the coming Lord. The former shall be first in the order of time, and then all shall ascend together to meet the Lord in the air. There is no proof in the text that the righteous shall rise before the wicked.

2. *Proof of the Oneness.*—It was before shown that the resurrec-

<sup>1</sup> Brown: *The Second Advent*, pp. 218-259.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 23.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Thess. iv, 16.

tion and the judgment shall be concomitant with the second advent. This means that all shall rise at the same time, as all shall be judged at the same time. Both shall directly follow the coming of our Lord.<sup>1</sup>

Hanna : *The Resurrection of the Dead* ; Wescott : *The Gospel of the Resurrection* ; Mattison : *The Resurrection of the Dead* ; Landis : *The Resurrection of the Body* ; Brown : *The Resurrection of Life* ; Cook : *Doctrine of the Resurrection* ; Kingsley : *The Resurrection of the Dead* ; Goulburn : *Resurrection of the Body* ; Cochran : *The Resurrection of the Dead* ; Drew : *Identity and General Resurrection of the Human Body* ; Bush : *Anastasis : or the Resurrection of the Body*.

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxv, 31-46 ; John v, 28, 29 ; Rev. xx, 11-15.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE JUDGMENT.

THERE is in the Scriptures the doctrine of a future, general judgment. Of course a general judgment must be future, as it must be subsequent to the present life of the race; yet we think it well to treat the subject according to the two views in which the Scriptures present it.

## I. A FUTURE JUDGMENT.

1. *Explicit Words of Scripture.*—The deeper idea of a future judgment is that of a present probation under a law of moral duty; the special idea, that of a future accounting at the divine judgment-seat for the deeds of the present life. That such is the view of the Scriptures a few appropriate texts will sufficiently show.

“Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.” “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”<sup>1</sup> Present moral duty and future amenability to the divine judgment are plainly the meaning of these texts. Just when we shall so answer is not stated; but the texts can hardly mean an earlier time than the termination of our present life. “For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”<sup>2</sup> These words are very explicit. There is the same idea of a present probation under a law of duty, and the same fact of a divine judgment-seat at which we shall answer for the deeds of our life. Further, as we read this text in the light of many others which relate to the same subject, it clearly means a judgment subsequent to this life.

Other texts definitely represent the judgment as in a future state. “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ,

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. xi, 9; xii, 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. v, 10.



who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."<sup>1</sup> The dead, as here named, must comprise all who shall have died prior to the judgment. Hence IN A FUTURE STATE. there must be a judgment of men in a future state. There are other very similar texts which confirm this view.<sup>2</sup> Then we have these explicit words: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."<sup>3</sup> The same truth is in the words of our Lord, wherein it appears that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Tyre and Sidon, and of Nineveh were amenable to a judgment still future.<sup>4</sup> Already these people have long been in the state of the dead; hence there must be a judgment subsequent to the present life.

2. *Judgment after the Resurrection.*—There is in many texts the proof of a judgment subsequent to the resurrection: but a few will suffice to make our proposition clear and sure. "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."<sup>5</sup> It is true that the judgment is not formally named in this text, yet the meaning of it is there, as manifest in the rewards rendered to the good and the evil; for judgment must precede such rewards. And this judgment follows the resurrection. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."<sup>6</sup> Part of this text, if it stood alone, might be limited to disembodied spirits, which, however, would little affect the doctrine of the judgment as a futurity; but the reference to the dead from the sea allows no such limitation. That reference means a resurrection of the subjects of the judgment.

## II. A GENERAL JUDGMENT.

1. *The Scripture Proof.*—Whether there shall be a general judgment, one in which all shall be judged at the same time, is a question which only the Scriptures can answer. There are evidences of reason for a future judgment, but not such as furnish a sufficient basis for the doctrine of a general judgment, though

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. iv, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Acts x, 42; 1 Pet. iv, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. ix, 27.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. x, 15; Luke x, 14; xi, 32.

<sup>5</sup> John v, 28, 29.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. xx, 12, 13.

sufficient for its defense against such objections as it may encounter.

A few appropriate texts will furnish, sufficiently, the Scripture proofs of a general judgment. Most of the necessary  
PROOF-TEXTS. texts are already quite familiar, as they have been used in the presentation of other facts of eschatology; hence we may the more briefly present them here. We begin with the words of our Lord respecting the end of the world.<sup>1</sup> Here the facts are: the coming of Christ in his glory, with all the holy angels; his session upon the throne of his glory; the gathering of all nations before him; the separation between the evil and the good; the final rewarding of each class. Surely these are the facts of a general judgment. "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."<sup>2</sup> The judgment of the world in an appointed day of the future must be a general judgment. After asserting the moral responsibility of all men, St. Paul says: "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."<sup>3</sup> This is the truth of an appointed time in which all shall be judged. In St. John's sublime vision of the judgment its general character is clearly seen.<sup>4</sup> There is the great white throne; and the dead, small and great, are before God; and all are judged according to their works. In no words could a general judgment be more clearly set forth.

It is objected to a general judgment, which must be delayed until  
OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED. the end of the world, that it is inconsistent with an intermediate state under judicial treatment, because the subjects of such a state must be judged prior to its inception. It is also maintained that this objection is the weightier if this state is in the places of final destiny. There is little force in the objection on either ground; indeed, none at all. That we are all the while the subjects of the divine judgment implies no impropriety in a judgment at death; and no more does the latter imply any impropriety in a final judgment after the resurrection. Neither can the places of souls in the intermediate state concern the propriety of such a judgment.

The long delay is urged as another objection. There are many delays in the final judgments of human courts, while meantime

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxv, 31-46.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xvii, 31.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. ii, 12, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. xx, 11-13.

the subjects are held under judicial treatment ; and such delays are often justified by wise reasons. And if comparatively short they may yet be as long in comparison with the narrow sphere of human judicature. Nor can there be any impropriety or wrong in such judicial ministries of the divine wisdom as may precede a final judgment.

2. *Manner of the Judgment.*—The time of the judgment is designated as a day, but with the idea of a definite period of the future rather than of its duration. The length of the time is not revealed ; and we have no means of knowing what it shall be. Nor can we know any thing of the manner of the judgment. It is represented as in the order of a court, but such representation may be largely figurative, so far as the actual manner is concerned, yet with the deepest meaning as to all that constitutes its reality. The manner must be such as will answer the chief end of the judgment—the vindication of God in his moral government. Such a manner, however now hidden from us, must surely be within the resources of his infinite wisdom and power.

## CHAPTER VI.

## FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

IF we accept the truth of the Scriptures we must be loyal to their teaching on the question of future punishment, as on all others, and none the less so because of its fearful character. On no subject could the perversion of truth be more disastrous. While such perversion may neutralize the practical force of the truth, and induce a false sense of security, it is powerless to avert the doom of sin. Our only safety lies in the acceptance of the salvation in Christ Jesus.

## I. RATIONAL PROOFS.

1. *Reality of a Moral Government.*—The reality of a moral government is a matter of common consent and affirmation. The sense of duty, and of responsibility to a divine Ruler, is deeply wrought into the moral consciousness of the race. This is clearly the doctrine of St. Paul: “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.”<sup>1</sup> Such a moral consciousness of the race means the reality of a moral government to which we are responsible.

2. *Under a Law of Equity.*—The idea of the divine equity is inseparable from the sense of responsibility. It may often be perverted or obscured, but the principle ever asserts itself. Distributive justice must be impartial. There may not be slight penalties for some and severe penalties for others, except as they may differ in the measure of guilt. We are not here concerned with the question respecting the degree of penalty which sin may deserve, nor with the question whether sin must be punished in the full measure of its desert. Whatever may be the truth in these respects, it must be true that divine punishments are administered according to a law of impartiality. Any true conception of God must constrain the admission of such equity. If there be omissions of this law in the present life there must be punishment in a future life, unless forgiveness is here attained.

3. *Present Omissions of the Law.*—The meaning here is that in

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ii, 14, 15.

the present life penalties are not inflicted according to a law of exact or impartial justice. This position can hardly be questioned. A little discussion will place its truth in a clear light.

Punishment may be inflicted or suffered in three modes: MODES OF PRESENT PUNISHMENT. in mind; in body; in estate. We do not here raise the question whether the sufferings endured in these modes are punishments in any strict sense. Our position is simply that if we are punished in the present life it must be in one or more of these modes. It is easy to show that punishments are not so administered according to the penal deserts of men.

There is no such punishment in the mental mode. One man suffers an intenser remorse for the theft of a dime IN MIND. than another for the crime of murder. And what is thus true of two persons is true of the same person in different periods of his life. There cannot be exact justice in cases so widely different. Then there are instances of self-justification, even of complacency, in the commission of heinous crime; and here there can be no punishment in the form of mental suffering. Some men are increasingly wicked through a long course of life; therefore they should be the subjects of an ever-deepening remorse, if they are to be thus punished in the measure of their desert. Such, however, is not the case; for there is no such deepening remorse. Indeed, the result is just the contrary; and it is in the very nature of things that it should be so. In a persistent course of sinning the spiritual vision is darkened and the moral feelings hardened into a state of insensibility. Conscience is seared as with a hot iron, and a state is reached which the Scriptures describe as "past feeling." Such being the results of a persistent course of evil doing, there can be no such remorse as a just punishment requires.

There are two forms of bodily suffering: one from the infliction of legal penalties; the other from the visitation of God; IN BODY. but in neither is there any strict ministry of justice according to the penal desert.

There are many sins, deeply heinous in the sight of God, for which human laws have no penalty. Again, in many BY LEGAL PENALTIES. cases criminals escape detection and punishment. Further, human courts are subject to many disabilities which often prevent an exact rendering of justice. Finally, the penalties of human laws are not graduated according to the demerit of human sins, as we see plainly in their wide variations in different ages and countries. Indeed, they are not based upon the strictly moral demerit of sin, and therefore cannot be the punishment of sin according to its moral desert.

Nor are the bodily conditions of men the award of an exact distributive justice. It seems entirely sufficient to state this. Who would assume to determine the moral character of his acquaintances according to the state of their physical health? We do not adjudge men good or bad just as they may be in a healthy or sickly state. Bodily sufferings are not in any proportion to moral character, and therefore cannot be the means whereby sin is justly punished in this life.

There are instances in which wicked men greatly suffer in matters of estate, but there are also many of abiding affluence. Nor are the experiences of good men obviously different in such matters. Surely there is no uniformity of difference. In this respect all things come alike unto all men. As it happens to the evil, so it happens to the good. Who would presume to determine the moral character of men according to their worldly estate? As such estate, whether of good or evil fortune, is no index to the ethical life of men, so the adversities which the wicked suffer in such matters cannot be the punishment of their sins according to the requirements of an impartial justice. Indeed, the present probationary life is not the sphere of distributive justice, in the strict ministries of which men are punished or rewarded according to their ethical life. We are here so related that the righteous often prevent the sufferings which, otherwise, the wicked would endure, while, on the other hand, the wicked cause much suffering to the righteous. In such a state of things there cannot be an impartial administration of justice.

Here, indeed, is the occasion of much doubt respecting a divine providence. Some even deny such a providence. The mental movement in such cases is obvious. It is the conviction of all minds that a divine moral government must be righteous; but some, limiting the view to the present life, and seeing therein no harmony between the moral character of men and their worldly fortunes, either question or openly deny such a government. And it is only on the ground of a future retribution that we can obviate such reasons of doubt or unbelief. Indeed, this life is not the sphere of an exact ethical justice. If it were, no one would suffer more or less than his moral desert; but the actual facts are far different. Often the wicked, even the heinously wicked, flourish in worldly affluence, in health and ease, while piety and charity, patriotism and philanthropy, suffer in penury or under the heel of oppression.

The inequality of rewards in the present life, as viewed in relation to moral character, is no new thought. It was present to

the minds of ancient men of God, and caused them no little perplexity. Job was thus deeply perplexed;<sup>1</sup> likewise the Psalmist,<sup>2</sup> and Solomon,<sup>3</sup> and Jeremiah.<sup>4</sup> In these passages there is the fullest recognition of the inequalities in the fortunes of the present life, as viewed in relation to moral character; and the only solution of the perplexity arising from such a state of facts is found in the thought of a future retribution.

4. *Requirement of Future Punishment.*—Such requirement is consequent to the principles and facts above presented. It is true that we are the subjects of a moral government, which must observe a law of equity or of impartial justice, particularly in the punishment of sin. It is equally true that in the present life there are many omissions of such punishment. Hence there must be a future retribution.

## II. SCRIPTURE PROOFS.

Some of these proofs are grounded on the facts of eschatology already considered, and may therefore be presented the more briefly. Indeed, the whole argument may be presented in its full strength without much elaboration.

1. *Final Neglect of Salvation.*—It is a clear truth of the Scriptures that the salvation from sin offered in the Gospel is conditional, and to be attained only on a compliance with its divinely specified terms. There is for us neither forgiveness, nor regeneration, nor sonship, nor final blessedness except on such terms. There is no salvation without repentance for past sins, faith in Christ, and a consecration of the life to his service. Without this salvation we are liable to the penalties of sin as announced in the Scriptures. Hence future punishment must be consequent to a final neglect of salvation. Yet such neglect is a fact on the part of many; there is no acceptance of the salvation in Christ.

2. *Fact of Dying in Sin.*—There is such a fact. Wicked men die without repentance or forgiveness; sometimes in the very act of sinning. In the light of Scripture it is a fearful thing so to die. “The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.”<sup>5</sup> If there is no future punishment why should not the wicked die as calmly as the righteous, and with the same comfort of hope? The contrast between the two in the event of death emphasizes the certainty of punishment hereafter. “Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.” “I said

<sup>1</sup> Job xxi, 7–15.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. lxxiii.

<sup>3</sup> Eccles. viii, 14.

<sup>4</sup> Jer. xii, 1, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Prov. xiv, 32.

therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins."<sup>1</sup> Neither should these words awaken any solicitude nor cause any alarm if there is no future punishment. As we read them in the light of the Gospel they must mean such punishment.

3. *Future Happiness only for the Righteous.*—We include as righteous all who attain to the Christian life or the state of true believers. In the Scriptures future blessedness is promised to them, and to them only. In no text is there any such promise to the wicked, while in many, such blessedness is expressly denied them. Those who believe in Christ shall be saved, but those who believe not shall perish.<sup>2</sup> The true disciples of Christ shall ultimately be with him; such is his promise to them, but to them only.<sup>3</sup> All who through spiritual regeneration become the children of God are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, and shall share in his glory; but there is no such promise to any others.<sup>4</sup> All who serve him in the spirit of true obedience shall attain to the heavenly life;<sup>5</sup> and all who wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb shall come to the blessedness of heaven;<sup>6</sup> but there is still not a word of such promise to any others. Future blessedness is set forth as peculiar to the righteous; indeed, as exclusively theirs. There is not only no intimation of any participation of the wicked in such blessedness, but such participation is formally denied. All this must mean for them a future state of punishment.

4. *Contemporary Doom of the Wicked.*—When the righteous receive their future reward the wicked shall meet a penal doom. On this question the Scriptures are explicit and full.<sup>7</sup> If these texts set forth the same future blessedness for the wicked as for the righteous and promised its bestowment at the same time, then how strong and sure would be the position of the most extreme Universalism! But just the contrary is the truth. When those who have rendered obedience to the will of God shall enter into the heavenly kingdom those who have refused such obedience shall depart accursed. When the children of God shall shine forth as the sun in the glory of his kingdom the children of iniquity shall be cast into hell. When the righteous enter into eternal life the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment.

5. *Punishment at the Final Advent.*—Out of many texts we select

<sup>1</sup> John viii, 21, 24.

<sup>2</sup> John iii, 16, 36.

<sup>3</sup> John xiv, 1-3.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. viii, 15-18.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. v, 9; Rev. xxii, 14.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. vii, 14-17.

<sup>7</sup> The appropriate texts would fill pages; but it will suffice that we give a few by reference: Matt. vii, 21-23; xiii, 41-43; xxv, 46; Luke xiii, 24-29; Rom. ii, 6-9.



only two for the presentation of this point : “ For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels ; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”<sup>1</sup> Of the other text we give the central points. The Son of man shall be revealed from heaven for the infliction of punishment on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe.<sup>2</sup>

6. *Resurrection to a Penal Doom.*—There will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust. This is definitely the doctrine of St. Paul ;<sup>3</sup> and this means the truth of what we here maintain. The same truth is clearly foreshadowed in these words : “ And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”<sup>4</sup> Then we have the most explicit words of our Lord : “ The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”<sup>5</sup>

7. *Final Judgment of Condemnation.*—Ample proof of this may be found in our treatment of the judgment ; so that a few texts will here suffice. “ For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law ; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law ; . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.”<sup>6</sup> “ For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”<sup>7</sup> “ But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”<sup>8</sup>

Here are seven arguments, all thoroughly scriptural in their ground, and severally conclusive of future punishment. In their combination the proof is cumulative in the highest degree.

### III. ETERNITY OF PUNISHMENT.

1. *Recoil from the Doctrine.*—There is a recoil of the sensibilities from the doctrine of future punishment, especially in respect to the duration of such punishment. This should cause no surprise. Indeed, we might say that it is justified by the divine reluctance to inflict such a doom. This reluctance is expressed in many words

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi, 27.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Thess. i, 6-10.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xxiv, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Dan. xii, 2.

<sup>5</sup> John v, 28, 29.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. ii, 12, 16.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Cor. v, 10.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Pet. iii, 7.

of entreaty and compassionate yearning ; most of all in the burden of sacrifice which divinity itself has borne, that we might be saved from such a doom. This recoil is easily made the occasion of a plausible appeal against the truth of the doctrine. But that is not a question to be settled by our sensibilities, especially by such as suffer this recoil. Such instinctive feelings have no rectoral function, and, if allowed sway, would be subversive of all government. No human government could survive their dominance. Hence they can have no part in determining the necessary punitive ministries of the divine government, which must rule over all moral beings.

2. *Fruitless Endeavor Toward a Rationale.*—Many attempts have been made to interpret the doctrine of eternal punishment in the light of reason ; that is, to bring it within the grasp of our intelligence. Our own view is that all such attempts are fruitless. We shall notice three of the leading modes in which such interpretation is attempted.

The first assumes an infinite demerit of sin ; and that it has such demerit on account of the perfections of the being against whom it is committed. Sin is committed against an infinite being, and therefore has infinite demerit. Such is a summary statement of the view. If the principle be true, seemingly, it must equalize all sins, which is neither rational nor scriptural. Further, we may posit another principle : Sin is the deed of a finite being, and therefore can have only finite demerit. And who shall say that the former is any clearer than the latter ? In truth, neither has any solution in our reason.

Another interpretation is attempted on the ground of a limitation of the atonement to the present life. As there is no saving grace in a future state, punishment must be eternal. There is, in fact, no new principle in this view. In the absence of atonement there could still be no such punishment, except on the ground of demerit. Hence we are brought back to the very principle on which the former interpretation is attempted ; and in this new relation it none the less remains beyond the grasp of our reason.

The rationale is often attempted on the ground of an endless sinning. As the future state of the wicked must be one of eternal sinning, so their punishment must be endless. Such is the doctrine. It may seem plausible, but is not above criticism.

The doctrine assumes a moral responsibility of the wicked in a state of necessity ; for such must be the state of final retribution.

There the good is no longer possible, and the evil, such as it may be, is unavoidable. Can there be moral responsibility in such a state? Our reason cannot affirm it, and therefore cannot thus find any rational interpretation of eternal punishment. A fixed state of reward after a state of trial, whether of blessedness or misery, must be constituted in a manner peculiar to itself. Just what it is, or what its relation to moral law, as viewed from the divine side, we have no power of knowing. Hence there is no explanation of eternal punishment in this manner.

Further, this attempted rationale begins with the concession that eternal punishment is not for the sins of this life, and that they do not deserve it. Yet it is an explicit truth of Scripture that such punishment, even in its uttermost duration, is for the sins of this life. There is neither mention nor intimation of any other. Hence the theory surrenders the scriptural ground of the doctrine, and offers instead an inferential basis, which for our reason is a mere assumption.

3. *Purely a Question of Revelation.*—If the punishment of sin is eternal it must be consistent with the justice and goodness of God; but for us it is thus consistent only through faith, not in the comprehension of our reason.

On the other hand, our reason is equally incompetent to pronounce against eternal punishment. Government in all its human forms is replete with perplexities. The gathered experiences of the ages bring us no solution. A chief perplexity respects the use of penalty as a necessary means of government. If such, then, be the state of facts with us in all the forms of human government, we surely cannot determine what shall be the provisions and ministries of the divine government, the sway of which is over all intelligences. The assumption of any such ability is most pretentious. And yet the man who finds the government of his little boy an utter perplexity can tell you just how God should govern the moral universe. With the narrow limitations of our own knowledge the Scriptures are the only sufficient source of truth respecting the duration of future punishment.

4. *Obvious Sense of Scripture.*—The principal words employed to express the duration of the doom of sin are *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος*. If sometimes used to express simply a very long future, or the utmost duration of the subject to which they are applied, their proper meaning is an endless duration. Such it is in the Scriptures, and such in their application to future punishment.

These are the words by which the Scriptures express the eternal things of God;<sup>1</sup> of Christ;<sup>2</sup> and of the Holy Spirit.<sup>3</sup> As used in these references they can mean nothing less than an endless future.

The same words are employed for the expression of the future happiness of the righteous.<sup>4</sup> No one who accepts the truthfulness of the Scriptures ever thinks of putting any limitation upon the future blessedness which is thus set forth in the use of these words.

The solemn truth follows that future punishment is expressed in the use of the same words.<sup>5</sup> In none of these instances is there any intimation of a qualified sense; hence they must here mean a limitless future. This meaning is emphasized, indeed, unalterably fixed, by the association of future happiness and future misery in the same texts. Indeed, while in one we have simply the word life—*ζωήν*—as expressive of future happiness, for the expression of future misery we have the words *τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον*, the latter meaning an eternal duration.<sup>6</sup> In another the same word—*αἰώνιος*—expresses the duration of both the happiness of the righteous and the misery of the lost.<sup>7</sup> If the word means a limitless future in the former application, such must be its meaning in the latter.

Such has been the interpretation of these words through all the Christian centuries, and such the interpretation of other words in application to the same subject. There have been differences respecting the ground of amenability to such punishment: as, for instance, whether we could be so amenable for the sin of Adam, or on the ground of an inherited depravity of nature, or whether only for personal sins, committed with the responsibility of moral freedom. Also there have been differences respecting the nature of the penal doom. The materialistic interpretation of its figurative representations, as held in the earlier centuries, and particularly by the mediæval Church, is now discarded and replaced by a more rational and truthful interpretation. But through all these differences and disputations a very remarkable

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i, 25; ix, 5; xi, 36; 2 Cor. xi, 31; Gal. i, 5; Phil. iv, 20; 1 Tim. i, 17; 1 Pet. v, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Luke i, 33; Heb. i, 8; xiii, 8; 2 Pet. iii, 18; Rev. i, 18; v, 13; xi, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. ix, 14.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xix, 29; xxv, 46; Mark x, 30; John iii, 15, 16, 36; iv, 14; vi, 51, 58; x, 28; xi, 26; Rom. ii, 7; 2 Cor. iv, 17; ix, 9; 1 John ii, 17.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xviii, 8; xxi, 19; xxv, 41, 46; Mark iii, 29; 2 Thess. i, 9; Heb. vi, 2; 2 Pet. ii, 17; Jude 13; Rev. xiv, 11.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xviii, 8.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xxv, 46.

unanimity has remained respecting the duration of such punishment. On this question the best scholarship of to-day is in full accord with the historic doctrine of the Church. This is a significant fact, and the more so because such accordance is not from any predilection or preference, but simply by constraint of the plain sense of Scripture.

Hovey : *The State of the Impenitent Dead* ; George : *Annihilation Not of the Bible* ; McDonald : *The Annihilation of the Wicked Scripturally Considered* ; Underwood : *Future Punishment* ; Anderson : *Future Destiny* ; Vernon : *Probation and Punishment* ; Cochrane : *Future Punishment* ; Farrar : *Eternal Hope* ; *Future Probation : A Symposium* ; Reimensnyder : *Doom Eternal* ; King : *Future Retribution* ; Jackson : *The Doctrine of Retribution*, Bampton Lectures, 1875.

## CHAPTER VII.

## FUTURE BLESSEDNESS.

IN Christian thought heaven is inseparably associated with future blessedness ; indeed, the terms are often used in the same sense. For the present, however, we may view the former simply as the place of the latter.

## I. HEAVEN A PLACE.

1. *Sense of Place.*—We here use the word place in its most literal sense, and therefore as meaning a material habitation, and as really such as this or any other world. In the view of some, heaven is a state, not a place. On the ground of such a distinction it can have no position nor relation with respect to any thing material or local. It is difficult to form any conception of a state when thus stripped of all qualities and relations. We can think of states of things, but such a state is nothing for our thought ; indeed, nothing in fact.

2. *Localism of Spiritual Beings.*—The soul has a present material habitation ; a fact which cannot be questioned, however mysterious it may be for our thought. Further, the fact shows a capacity in spiritual beings for localization ; for the mere form of the body in which the soul now dwells cannot be essential to such localism. Hence there is for us, even irrespective of the resurrection, the capability for a future material habitation. Even God, the infinite Spirit, localizes himself, that finite spirits may have the higher privilege of communion with him. If it be said that this localization is only relative, it may be replied that it is such as answers its purpose ; and, further, while we know the localization of finite spirits as a fact, we know nothing of its mode. For our thought the latter is as profound a mystery as the former.

Philosophic thought denies to purely spiritual being all spacial qualities ; still for such thought ubiety is inseparable from the notion of finite spirits. If in social relation, a proper localism is a necessity ; and such is eminently the relation of angels and glorified saints.

3. *Requirement of the Resurrection.*—The resurrection body, however transformed and glorified, will still be material ; and it is out of accord with both reason and Scripture, that the glorified

saints, with the investment of such bodies, should dwell apart or wander separately in the infinite spaces, each finding his heaven in the solitude of his own consciousness ; and equally out of accord with both, that, if gathered into a heavenly fellowship, they should be afloat in the empty space, without any real world around or beneath them. Finite spirits, with a material investment and dwelling in fellowship, must have a local habitation.

4. *Pervasive Sense of Scripture.*—The Scriptures ever represent heaven as a place. This is so plain a fact that it hardly needs any illustration. Our Lord represented it as a place or mansion in his Father's house ;<sup>1</sup> St. Paul, as a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.<sup>2</sup> Again, it is the temple of God, the place of his throne and glory ;<sup>3</sup> and a great city, the holy Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> No doubt these are figurative representations of heaven ; but that does not affect the underlying reality of place.

5. *Location of Heaven.*—Not a few hold the theory of a mundane location of heaven, and among them are great names. A ground in Scripture is claimed for this view,<sup>NOT MUNDANE.</sup> though we think the texts adduced in its support very far short of conclusive. Proof is sought in the words of St. Paul respecting the creature—*ἡ κτίσις*—which was made subject to vanity, but waits for a glorious transformation.<sup>5</sup> There are weighty objections to such a use of the passage. It is, by common consent, a very obscure one ; too obscure, indeed, to be made the ground of any particular theory. Further, any exegetical authority for the application of the original word to the physical world is fully balanced by an adverse authority. Finally, even granting such an application, it would not follow that the earth shall be the future home of the saints. In other texts it is shown that, after a dissolution or passing away of the heavens and the earth there shall be new heavens and a new earth,<sup>6</sup> but without any proof that the latter shall be a reconstruction of the former ; certainly without any that this world shall thus be constituted the future heaven of the righteous.

The clear sense of Scripture is against an earthly location of heaven. As Christ approached the time of his departure he spoke to his disciples of his Father's house and its many mansions, and assured them that he was going to prepare a place for them, and that he would come again and receive them unto himself where he is.<sup>7</sup> These facts must mean that the future heaven shall be other than this earth, and far away from it. Such meaning is placed beyond question by the collocation of three

<sup>1</sup> John xiv, 1-3.<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. v, 1.<sup>3</sup> Rev. vii, 9-17.<sup>4</sup> Rev. xxi, 10.<sup>5</sup> Rom. viii, 19-21.<sup>6</sup> 2 Pet. iii, 10-13 ; Rev. xxi, 1-4.<sup>7</sup> John xiv, 1-3.

verses : “ And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” “ And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee.” “ Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.”<sup>1</sup> Whither Christ ascended to be glorified with the Father, there shall his disciples be with him, and there is heaven. Surely, then, it cannot have an earthly location. Beyond these facts we know nothing of that location ; nor are we concerned to know any thing more. Heaven is what it is in itself and in the elements of blessedness, wholly irrespective of its location.

## II. BLESSEDNESS OF HEAVEN.

1. *Beauty of the Place.*—The many orders of sentient existence are furnished with homes according to their gradations. This is the rule from the lowest to the highest ; so that, the higher the grade, the larger and better the habitation. Man has his home under the same law ; in the same world, indeed, but larger and more richly furnished than that of any lower order, according to his vastly higher endowments. His Edenic home, as God prepared and adorned it for him as the place of his probationary trial, was far more beautiful than his present home. What then must be the future home of the children of God ! It is reasonable to think that its beauty and grandeur will correspond with their own glorification. More than this, heaven is the home of the angels and God ; the home of the glorified Son. If, therefore, heaven shall correspond, as it must, with the character of its inhabitants, it must be of inconceivable beauty and grandeur. Revelation portrays it in the use of the finest imagery which the mind can command, but the reality must infinitely transcend all such picturing.

2. *Elements of Blessedness.*—The holiness of heaven means the absence of all that could mar its beauty or disturb its joy. In the absence of sin this world would still be as the garden of Eden. There will be no sin in heaven ; hence, none of the miseries which inevitably spring from its presence, but the pleasures which must ever flow from the perfection of holiness.

Immortality is the heritage of the saints in heaven. “ Neither can they die any more : for they are equal unto the angels ; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.”<sup>2</sup> “ And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John xvii, 5, 11, 24.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xx, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xxi, 4.

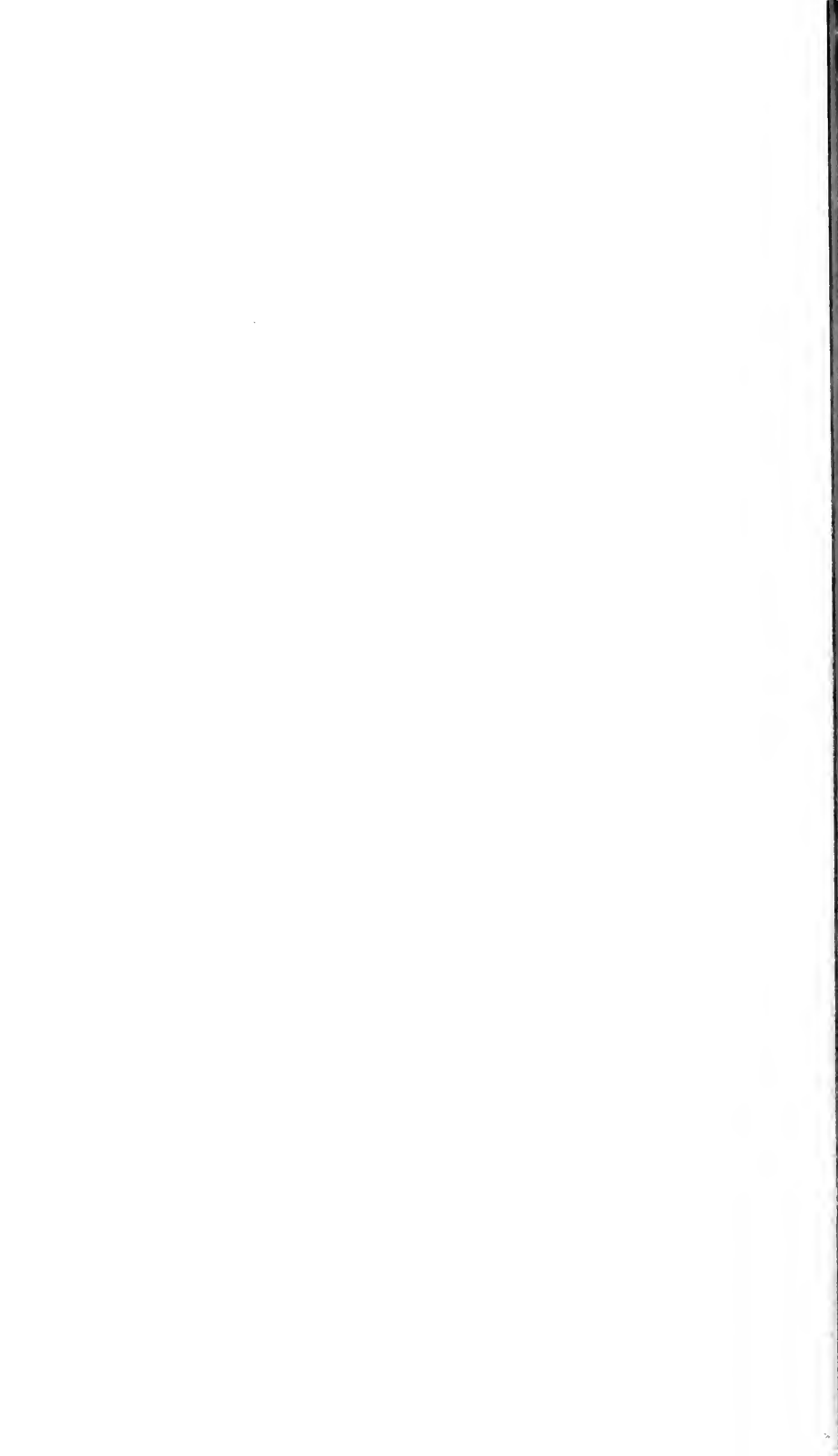


The intellectual life of heaven must infinitely transcend the attainments of the present life. The mental powers will there be free from many present limitations. In the new conditions they must have large development. There is no apparent reason why they should not have a perpetual growth. Certainly they will be capable of a perpetual acquisition of knowledge, and a universe of truth will be open to their research. Many problems, now dark and perplexing, will there be solved. The ceaseless pursuit and acquisition of knowledge through all the realms of truth will be a ceaseless fountain of pleasure.

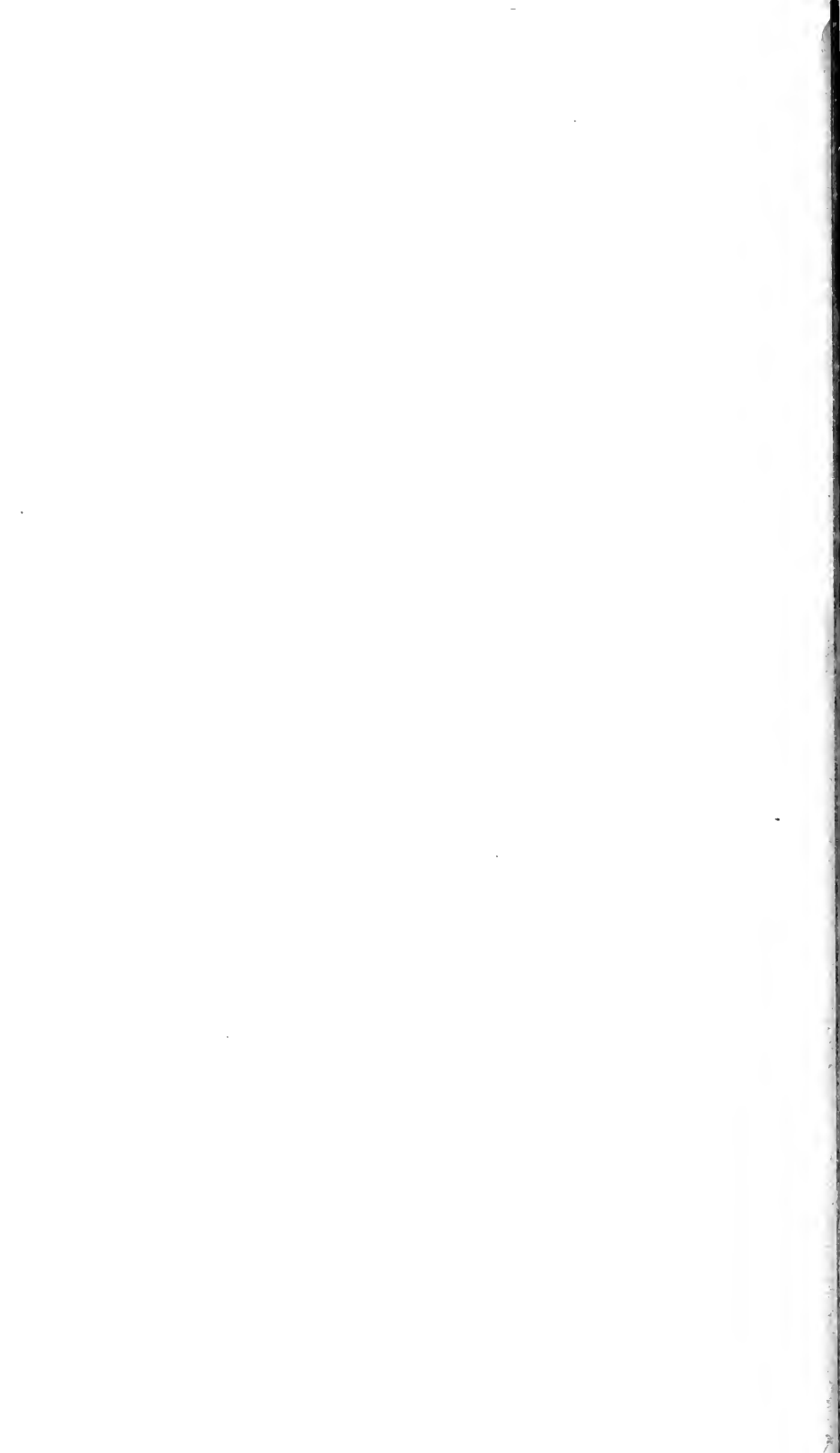
Heaven will be replete with loving fellowships and holy worship. The imperfections which so often mar our present social life, even in its most spiritual forms, will have no place in those fellowships. There love shall be supreme. Through the headship of Christ saints and angels shall form a happy brotherhood. Yet the saints will have a song and a joy which the angels can share only by the power of sympathy—the song of redemption and the joy of salvation. Holy love will make all duty a holy delight. The heavenly worship, kindled by the immediate presence and open vision of God and the Lamb, shall be full of holy rapture.

In such a life, with powers ever growing and a future ever in hope, the blessedness of heaven will be complete.

Harbaugh : *The Heavenly Home* ; Thompson : *The Better Land* ; Plummer : *The Resurrection of the Just and their Condition in a Future State* ; Spicer : *The Spirit Life and its Relations* ; Hamilton : *Beyond the Stars ; or, Heaven, its Inhabitants, Occupations, and Life* ; Bates : *The Four Last Things, Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell* ; Watts : *The World to Come* ; Pike : *Religion and Eternal Life ; or, Irreligion and Perpetual Ruin* ; Taylor : *Physical Theory of Another Life* ; Dick : *The Philosophy of a Future State* ; Welby : *Mysteries of Life, Death, and Futurity* ; Stewart and Tait : *The Unseen Universe ; or, Physical Speculations on a Future State* ; Oxenham : *Catholic Eschatology and Universalism* ; Strong : *The Doctrine of a Future Life*.



APPENDICES.



# APPENDICES.

## I.

### INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

#### i, 1.

THE question of inspiration concerns the agency of the Holy Spirit in the authorship of the Scriptures. What was that agency? The true answer to this question must give us the true doctrine of inspiration.

The fact of such an agency we accept on the ground of the Scriptures. In the books of the Old Testament a divine original of the truths set forth is often asserted. Further, both Christ and his apostles witness to the divine authorship of those books. Also, in the New Testament there are both the promise and the open profession of an inspiration of the Holy Spirit. With this statement of the fact we proceed with the doctrine.

Not a few have attempted a proper distinction between inspiration and revelation; and the question seems to have been regarded as one of perplexity. We must think that such perplexity arises only from a lack of thorough analysis. For the same reason, in many instances, the true distinction has not been made. The true and simple view is, that inspiration is a mode of the divine agency in the communication of religious truth, and that such truth is the product of the inspiration. Now, if we restrict revelation to the literal sense of the term, that is, a disclosure of unknown truths, and as here meaning such truths of religion as we receive only through the Scriptures, the same distinction between inspiration and revelation fully remains; and such is the only true distinction. But there may be a revelation through some other mode of the divine agency, as, for instance, the oral teaching of our Lord; and in such case there must be the same distinction between such agency and revelation as the product.

There is as much need of a proper distinction between inspiration and the Scriptures as between inspiration and revelation. If we restrict revelation to the literal sense of the term, and particularly to religious truths super-

INSPIRATION  
AND REVELA-  
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INSPIRATION  
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naturally made known, it is much narrower than the Scriptures, because they contain many things which were naturally known by the sacred writers. But there is no reason to restrict the agency of the Spirit in inspiration to the supernatural truths which the Scriptures contain. When that agency is properly interpreted in its several modes we shall find a place for it, in some mode, in all the contents of the Scriptures. We do not except even the oral teachings of our Lord. The sacred writers needed such help of the Spirit that they might give these lessons to the world in a truthful and authoritative form. And our Lord himself definitely promised them such help for this very service.<sup>1</sup> But as inspiration is thus common to all the Scriptures, there is still the same distinction between such agency and its product.

Whatever the theory of inspiration, it is clearly the sense of the Scriptures that there was a special agency of the Spirit in their authorship. It is thus discriminated from other offices of the Spirit in the illumination and regeneration of men; in the Christian life of believers; in the effective ministry of the Gospel. These offices are directly in the interest of personal salvation, not for the original communication of truth. In inspiration the definite purpose is an authoritative communication of truth from God, whether by the spoken or written word.

For the purpose of a revelation there must be an immediate operation of the Spirit in the mind of the mediate agent. The fact is the same whether the operation is to prepare the mind for the reception of the truth, or for the communication of the truth to the prepared mind, or for its guidance in the publication of the truth. An immediate agency is not peculiar to this office of the Spirit, but is common to all his offices in the work of our personal salvation, whether of conviction, regeneration, assurance, or guidance and help in the Christian life. Such is the fact, whatever the exterior means. There is such an agency of the Spirit in the inspiration of the Scriptures.

As the purpose of this inspiration is definite, it must be special to some, not common to the many. The recipients must fulfill a special office in the divine revelation. A consideration of the functions of this office belongs to the question of theories of inspiration. A proper human agency is entirely consistent with the divine agency. An immediate agency of the Spirit is not necessarily absolute, and hence may give place for the agency of the inspired mind in the conscious use of its own faculties.

<sup>1</sup> John xiv, 26.

## I. THREEFOLD OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT.

In the operations of the human mind a possession of the truth must precede its expression, whether by voice or pen. But truth is not native to the mind, and, as a possession, must in some way be acquired. For a knowledge of many higher truths, however acquired, there must be a mental preparation. There are such requisites for the mediate agency of the human mind in a divine revelation. Whatever its preparation, there is no power for the discovery of the higher truths of Scripture, nor for such an expression of them as shall give them authority and value as a revelation. Hence there must be a threefold operation of the Spirit, answering to the three necessary spheres of the mediate human agency, in order to a divine revelation. If there is not the full requirement for every part and particular of the Scriptures, it is yet real and full for the higher truths of religion. Their publication through a mediate human agency, intelligently active in itself, could not otherwise be achieved. This threefold operation of the Spirit should be more definitely treated in its several facts.

1. *Illumination of the Mediate Agent.*—The first necessary office of the Spirit is that of mental illumination. Such illumination is a familiar idea of Scripture. As a part of inspiration, the operation may be similar to that of Christ when he opened the minds of his disciples that they might understand the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup> They were thus enabled to understand truths previously revealed. In like manner there must be a divine illumination of the mediate agents of revelation for the proper reception and apprehension of its truths. Without such a quickening of their mental powers and clearing of their spiritual vision they must have been without capacity for the higher truths of religion, and hence without ability for their proper publication.

2. *Communication of the Truth.*—When the mind was thus prepared for the reception of divine truth this truth itself was still to be given. The higher truths of religion are not an immediate cognition even of the illuminated mind, nor within the reach of its own powers. The illumination raises these powers to a higher receptive capacity, but it neither changes the law of their action nor adds any new faculty. Hence there are many truths of Scripture which they could neither originate nor discover. Such truths must be directly communicated in order to their publication. This communication is the office of the Holy Spirit in inspiration. Such

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv, 45.

was the source of prophetic vision and utterance. The divine Master, just before his departure, promised a mission of the Spirit to his disciples, who should teach them all things, and bring to their remembrance the truths which he had spoken.<sup>1</sup> He also promised that in the exigency of their arraignment before magistrates the Holy Spirit should teach them in the same hour what they should say.<sup>2</sup> Some of these deliverances have gone into the Scriptures as a part of the divine revelation. These special facts may illustrate the agency of the Spirit in the communication of truth to the agents through whom it should be published.

3. *Agency in the Publication.*—The truth as thus given is a purely personal possession. Even if a revelation to the recipients it is not such to others, nor can it be until its proper publication. Hence, for the purpose of a revelation there is this third sphere of inspiration. The publication of truth is a distinct fact from both its reception and possession. The expression of truth concerns the truth itself. It deeply concerns the truths of Scripture that the Holy Spirit should have been co-operative in their expression or publication. There was such an agency.<sup>3</sup> It was as requisite and as real for the written as for the spoken word. As inspired men were moved and guided in writing the Scriptures, so, and only thus, are they a divine revelation.

4. *Inspiration as the Requirement.*—There was not a requirement for the same agency of the Spirit respecting all parts of the Scriptures. Even without any distinction as to the importance of some parts as compared with others, there is still a wide distinction as it respects their relation to the minds of the sacred writers. In every book there is more or less which the author could know through the ordinary modes of knowledge, and which also was fully within the command of his own powers. In such case there was no need of either the illuminative or the communicatory office of the Spirit; yet there was need of such an agency as should determine what should go into the Scriptures. While, therefore, there is a place for inspiration in all parts of the Scriptures, the threefold offices of the Spirit were necessary only with respect to their higher truths.

## II. ERRONEOUS THEORIES OF INSPIRATION.

So far, we have treated inspiration mainly as a fact and as to its modes, and the question of theory or doctrine chiefly remains. Preparatory to the direct treatment of this question we notice a few erroneous theories.

<sup>1</sup> John xiv. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xii, 11, 12.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Pet. i, 21.



1. *Inspiration of Genius.*—It is only in a qualified sense that genius can be called an inspiration. There is in it a special power of insight and originality, but it is still only a human power. Poetic genius is creative in the sphere of the ideal, but is without any special originative power in the sphere of religious truth. The poets have given us no divine theology. Homer and Virgil rise not above the religious thought of their time. Neither Milton nor Dante lifts us into brighter skies. Plato was a genius in religious as in philosophic thought, but his theology is infinitely below that of John. The higher truths of Scripture could not originate in any inspiration of genius. Were this even possible, they would still lack the certainty and authority necessary to their special religious value.

2. *Special Religious Consciousness.*—There are instances of a specially intense and clear religious consciousness; but without divine inspiration its capacity is only human. Such a consciousness might be very receptive of inspiration, or of religious truth communicated from without, but could not be specially originative of such truth. The higher truths of Scripture could neither originate in such a mind nor receive from it their necessary certainty and authority.

3. *Illumination and Elevation.*—In this view the office of inspiration is fulfilled in the spiritual illumination and elevation of certain chosen minds. These terms, however, do not express really distinct offices of the Spirit, though sometimes distinctively used. Such a divine illumination of the mind must quicken its powers and clear its vision; and in this there is spiritual elevation. The same divine operation answers for both. But the defects of the theory are obvious. It answers for the preparation of the mind for the reception of the higher truths of religion, and hence contains so much of a true doctrine. This element we have previously recognized as necessary. But there is no provision for either the communication or the publication of the truth. The mediate agent is left to his own resources, simply with the advantage of a subjective illumination. This is utterly insufficient both for a knowledge of the higher truths of Scripture and for their trustworthy publication.

4. *Divine Superintendence.*—The idea is of an influence of the Spirit within the minds of the sacred writers which preserved them from serious error in teaching, and also secured through their agency a record of such facts and truths of religion as were important to be known. There is here one element of a true theory of inspiration, as we have previously explained. It might be so con-

strued as to seem sufficient for the whole truth, but does not really admit of such an interpretation. If so intended, there is an unnecessary caution in the use of terms. If the facts of a true and sufficient inspiration are held, it is far better to use terms clearly expressive of the whole truth. This theory is really lower in some of its facts than the one just previously noticed. It makes no provision for the necessary illumination of the mediate agent. Nor does it provide for the supernatural communication of the truth, but leaves him to his own resources of discovery. It is halting and indefinite as to a sufficient divine guidance in the publication of the truth.

5. *The Mechanical Theory.*—This is the theory of verbal inspiration. The divine agency monergistically determines both the ideas and the words, while the mediate human agency is a mere passive instrument. If the very words are thus mechanically determined, so must the ideas be determined. Such an inspiration must thoroughly dominate the mediate agent and deprive him of all mental self-action. Further, there must be the same determining influence of the Spirit for the whole Bible; the same for the most incidental and familiar facts of history and personal experience as for the profoundest mysteries of revelation; the same for the friendly salutations of Paul as for the deepest and most vital moral and religious truths of his epistles.

PERPLEXITIES. The theory of a common verbal inspiration is beset with very serious difficulties—enough, indeed, to disprove it. We notice a few.

THE HUMAN ELEMENT. The theory cannot be reconciled with the manifest human element in the structure of the Scriptures. Such an element is pervasive of the whole. The mental cast and culture, the peculiar temper and style of each sacred writer are wrought into his composition. These facts are as real and obvious in the Scriptures as in any purely secular writings. They cannot be explained except on the ground of the proper mental agency of the sacred writers. While divinely inspired they must still have been in the possession and conscious use of their own faculties. With such personal agency they could not have been the subjects of an inspiration which reduced them to the passivity of mere instruments.

DIFFERENCES OF STATEMENT. There are differences of Scripture statement which the mechanical theory can neither account for nor reconcile with itself. Different writers state the same things with verbal differences. We may instance so definite a thing as the inscription on the cross. There are four statements of its form: “This

is Jesus, the King of the Jews;”<sup>1</sup> “The King of the Jews;”<sup>2</sup> “This is the King of the Jews;”<sup>3</sup> “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”<sup>4</sup> The differences are slight, but real. The verbal theory cannot account for them; certainly not on any reasonable ground. Hence, on the acceptance of that theory, we should have to reject at least three of these statements as lacking either in inspiration or in textual integrity; and with the further consequence of entire uncertainty as to which account, if any one, consisted of inspired and true words. Such instances of variation, of which there are many, are quite indifferent to a real and sufficient inspiration, but utterly inexplicable on the verbal theory.

The logic of the theory must deny the present and future possession of a divine revelation. It requires for such a revelation the determining inspiration of the very words of Scripture. If this be necessary, then only an exact set of words, and the very words originally inspired, can constitute a revelation. But they are not in our possession. The autographs of the sacred writers no longer exist. The most trustworthy versions and manuscripts are without exact verbal agreement. The most learned in the question are not always agreed as to the true text. Further, the great multitudes of the race must always be dependent upon translations, which cannot be the exact verbal equivalents of the originals. These facts are entirely indifferent to a real and sufficient inspiration; but on the verbal theory they deny us the possession of a revelation.

Nothing can be necessary to a divine revelation which is not necessary to a truthful expression of the divine mind. Neither a common verbal inspiration nor an exact and fixed set of words is so necessary. This is manifest in the fact that the Scriptures, just as other writings, would admit verbal changes without affecting the sense. Facts of Scripture are conclusive against that necessity. Such are the differences in the statements of the same events and truths. Such also is the fact that when Christ and his apostles referred to the Scriptures as the word of God and of divine authority they often had in view the Septuagint version, which is far from being a literal rendering of the Hebrew. There is this further decisive fact, that their Scripture citations were often from the same version, and without any attempt at exact verbal accuracy.

Still, it need not be questioned that sometimes inspiration was such as to determine the very words of Scripture. Yet it is not important that we be able to identify such instances. The assertion

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvii, 37.    <sup>2</sup> Mark xv, 26.    <sup>3</sup> Luke xxiii, 38.    <sup>4</sup> John xix, 19.

of such importance would concede a superior excellence to such instances of inspiration. We should thus discriminate against the more common mode, and also return to the necessity for an exact set of words, with all its insuperable difficulties.

### III. THE DYNAMICAL THEORY.

1. *Sense of the Theory.*—There is a supernatural operation of the Spirit within the consciousness and appropriate faculties of the mediate agent, yet not such as reduces him to the office of a mere instrument. He remains self-conscious and personally active in the use of his own faculties. Yet through the agency of the Holy Spirit he is so enlightened and possessed of the truth, and so guided in its expression, that the truth so given forth, whether by the spoken or written word, is from God. Through this agency the true and sufficient authorship of the Scriptures is with the Holy Spirit.

2. *Place for the Human Element.*—We previously noted this manifest element in the construction of the Scriptures, and also pointed out its irreconcilable contrariety to the theory of a common verbal inspiration. The dynamical theory gives a proper place to this element, yet in a sense entirely consistent with such an inspiration as secures to the Holy Spirit the proper authorship of the Scriptures.

3. *Clear of Serious Difficulty.*—This theory avoids the insuperable difficulties of a common verbal inspiration, as previously noted. Nor are there others of trying force. Surely there is none in the notion of such an agency of the Spirit as the theory alleges, real and sufficient as it is for the purpose of a divine revelation. If any finite mind is within the reach of an immediate divine influence, the human soul, made in the image of God, must be open to his inspiration. Otherwise, he never has exerted, and never could exert, any direct influence upon a single soul to enlighten and quicken it, to renew and lift it up, to guide and help it in the moral exigencies of life. Then, while through some means God might still speak to the ear or symbolize truth to the eye, he could not by any immediate interior influence open the mind for the reception of truth, or communicate truth to it, or make it the mediate agent of truth to others. Such an implication of divine impotence accords with a denial of the divine personality, but can have no place in a scheme of truth grounded in Christian theism.

4. *Sufficient for a Revelation.*—The Scriptures are as really a divine revelation on this theory as they could be on that of verbal inspiration. This can be true, and is true, because an exact set of

words, dictated by the Spirit, is not necessary either to the truthful expression of the divine mind or to the divine authorship of the Scriptures. The sufficiency of the theory is manifest as we group its facts. Through an interior illumination the Holy Spirit prepared the minds of the mediate agents for the reception of divine truth, and then communicated the necessary truth to them, and finally so directed them as to secure a proper expression of this truth, and also the selection and use of such other truths as might be proper for the Scriptures. These facts meet all the requirements of a divine revelation, and determine the truths so uttered to be in a very profound sense the word of God.

#### IV. INSPIRATION AND THE SCRIPTURES.

1. *Fact of Inspiration from the Scriptures.*—The divine agency is as really supernatural in inspiration as in a miracle; but, however manifest in the consciousness of the inspired mind, it is not open to the observation of others. Hence, our only direct knowledge of inspiration, as a specific form of the divine agency for the definite purpose of a revelation, is from the Scriptures themselves.

2. *Not a Credential of the Sacred Writers.*—If we should attempt to prove the inspiration of the Scriptures from their own statements, and then, that they are a divine revelation because inspired, our argument would move in a circle, and hence bring no logical result. Such is a rather common fallacy, and one far more harmful than helpful to the truth.

It is only with such a fallacy that inspiration can be classed as a credential of revelation. The sacred writers must be divinely accredited before their testimony can be received for the fact of their own inspiration. Thus, first of all, inspiration must take its place with other facts and truths of Scripture, and be true to us in common with the others because the sacred writers are divinely accredited witnesses. Hence, inspiration, while fulfilling an important office in revelation, should not be classed as one of their credentials.

3. *Verification of Inspiration.*—As the fact of inspiration is from the Scriptures, its verification must be in the facts which accredit the sacred writers as divinely commissioned teachers of truth. Prophecy and miracles are their chief credentials. With these, however, we may combine all other facts which accredit their mission and verify their message. Being thus accredited as messengers of truth from God, they are most credible witnesses for the fact of their own inspiration. There is no more reason to ques-

tion their testimony respecting this fact than respecting others. If we reject this we may reject the others; for all have a common ground of verity. Hence to discard inspiration is really to discard revelation.

4. *A Rationally Credible Fact.*—On the ground of theism inspiration is rationally possible. If we deny this we must deny all facts of a divine providence. There could be no creation; no control of the laws of nature; no power of influence within the human soul to enlighten, purify, or help it. If God could do any of these things, then could he inspire chosen minds for the purpose of a revelation, and through their agency communicate religious truth. Theism must carry with it this consequence.

Inspiration, while a possible fact, is intrinsically probable. It is the most rational mode of the divine agency for the purpose of a revelation. We see not any other which might replace it and fulfill the same office. Its probability is the same as the probability of a revelation.

5. *Value of Inspiration.*—The question of a divine agency in the origin of the Scriptures is a vital one. Such an agency must have operated in a mode to secure to itself their proper authorship. Inspiration, as previously set forth, is such a mode. No other is apparent. The power of miracles might still have been given; but this would not answer for the purpose of a revelation through human agency. Miracles fulfill their office simply as the credentials of the messengers of truth. Only inspiration can reveal the divine mind through the agency of the human. Without it the sacred writers would have been left mostly to their own resources. All other supernatural aids would have proved themselves insufficient. The apostles were most highly favored with the oral instruction of the divine Master. But while with him they were dull of apprehension as to the deeper truths of his lessons; and with the lapse of time they must have been incapable of their proper reproduction and publication. Even they needed the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in its own modes of operation. It was necessary that the Spirit should open their minds for the reception of truth, and lead them into the truth, and bring again, and more fully, to their understanding the lessons of the Master, that they might give the truth to men. It was necessary that other truths should thus be communicated to chosen minds, through whose agency they might take their place in the divine revelation. Through inspiration the accredited messengers of divine truth could fulfill their office and give the truth to the world. Inspiration is thus the divine warrant of truth in the Scriptures. Their divine author-

BEST MODE OF  
REVELATION.

ship is in their inspiration; their supreme authority and transcendent value in their divine authorship.

Lee: *The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*; Bannerman: *Inspiration, etc.*; Garbett: *God's Word Written*; Jamieson: *The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*; Warrington: *The Inspiration of the Scriptures*; Wordsworth: *On the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*; Noble: *Ptenary Inspiration of the Scriptures*; Patton: *The Inspiration of the Scriptures*; Gaussen: *Theopneustia*; Curtis: *The Human Element in the Inspiration of the Scriptures.*

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## II.

## THE ANGELS.

i, 200.

THE original words usually rendered angel mean primarily a messenger, and, more broadly, anything which God employs in the service of his providence. In a more specific sense they mean personal beings of a distinct and definite order. Of such beings we here treat.

## I. CONCERNING THE ANGELS.

1. *Realities of Existence.*—The existence of such an order of beings is rationally probable. By no necessity is man the culmination of God's creative work. Even naturalistic evolution has no right to prescribe for itself any such limitation. If man is the product of purely natural forces, as operative in this world, then in some vastly older and larger world such forces may have evolved a much higher order of beings. Atheistic evolution can oppose nothing to this inference. We, however, view the question from the ground of theism. As we ascend the scale of creative existences from its lowest form up to man, and then look away into the vastness of the heavens which God has set in order, the creation of beings higher than man seems most reasonable.

The words of Scripture respecting the angels cannot be reduced to a merely figurative sense, nor to the meaning of mere things in the providential use of God, nor yet to mere forms of his personal energizing. In the clear light of the Scriptures the angels are realities of personal existence. That such was the faith of the Jews in the time of our Lord is above question. The Pharisees represented the common faith, which the Sadducees denied; and on this issue both Christ and his apostles were surely with the Pharisees, and against the Sadducees. Thus in a disputation with the latter, on a question which involved the future existence of man, Christ openly recognized the existence of the angels.<sup>1</sup> On this same question, and with the full statement of the issue, Paul in like manner openly declared himself with the Pharisees against the Sadducees.<sup>2</sup> Hence on the authority of both Christ and Paul the angels are realities of existence. The rationalis-

NO MERELY  
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to a merely figurative sense, nor to the meaning of mere things in the providential use of God, nor yet to mere forms of his personal energizing.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxii, 30.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xxiii, 6-8.



tic assumption, that both spoke simply in accord with the popular faith without any implication of its truth, is utterly groundless. It was not the wont of Christ so to speak, and could not have been his manner in this instance. The issue on which he spoke forbids the idea of such a manner. He answers the objection of the Sadducees to the resurrection and a future life by setting forth the new conditions of that life. The objection is void because in the transition we shall become "as the angels of God in heaven." Christ could not have made such use of what he knew to be a popular error. If on this question Paul knew that truth was with the Sadducees, his joining the Pharisees against them was unmanly, dishonest, indeed.

2. *Of a Spiritual Nature.*—On the authority of the Scriptures, there can be no question of a spiritual nature of angels. Their endowments and activities allow no other view. That they have such a nature has been the common faith of the Church, though there has not been the same unanimity on the question whether they are wholly without corporeity. Their luminous appearance in some instances, together with the difficulty of conceiving the activity of an unbodied spirit, has led some to the opinion that they have a material body, very ethereal in its mode, yet furnishing the condition of their agency. It accords with the Scriptures that angels were not always visible when present, and hence that they possessed no corporeity with self-manifesting quality. Visibility, therefore, was in all instances voluntary. We cannot deny the possibility of such a manifestation without a material corporeity. Their offices in the economies of religion occasionally required their manifestation, and it is easy to think them endowed with such power, however mysterious for our conception. The activity of an embodied spirit has no peculiar difficulty for our thought. The activity of our own spirit is a familiar fact of consciousness; but if we seek for its mode we shall find it quite as hidden as the agency of an unbodied spirit. The common faith of the Church, that angels are without material corporeity, seems more in accord with the Scriptures.

3. *With Personal Endowments.*—The collocation of a few appropriate texts will set the personality of angels in a clear light. All that we require is such facts in them as belong to personality in ourselves, or such forms of activity as are possible only with the constituent powers of personality. The angels bless the Lord and fulfill his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.<sup>1</sup> In such exercises there is an intelligent

ERRONEOUS  
ASSUMPTION.

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THEIR OFFICES.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. ciii, 20.

recognition of God and his claims, of his majesty and love. There is also a response of the religious affections in reverence and praise, and a voluntary self-consecration to the service and worship of God. With such forms of activity there must be intellect, sensibility, and will—that complex of powers which constitutes personality. The angel which announced to the shepherds the advent of our Lord, and the multitude of the heavenly host which quickly joined him in the joy of the great event, were all personal beings.<sup>1</sup> The angels which, with intent mind and intense desire, study the mystery of redemption, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, must have a personal existence.<sup>2</sup> The joy of the angels over the repentance of a sinner is a personal joy.<sup>3</sup> There must be an intelligent recognition of the interests which center in such an event, and also an affectional nature deeply responsive to its blessedness. The angel which ministered to Christ after the temptation in the wilderness, and the angel which strengthened him in the agonies of Gethsemane were personal beings. Any other view robs the facts of their deepest truth. Personal agency cannot be simulated; and beings who uniformly act in a personal manner must be persons.

4. *Grade of their Powers.*—Our own powers are the only standard with which we can compare the powers of angels. They are like us in personality, and finite like ourselves. They are neither omniscient nor omnipotent, and yet have much knowledge and power. They have a wonderful facility of movement, and large executive efficiencies. The truth of these statements lies in the facts of Scripture respecting the angels. “The wisdom of an angel” is used in an adjective sense for the expression of the highest measure of finite knowledge.<sup>4</sup> Angels are greater in power and might than men.<sup>5</sup> They excel in strength, or are mighty in strength.<sup>6</sup> They are named as the mighty angels of the Lord, or the angels of his power.<sup>7</sup> The high grade of their powers is also expressed in their designation as thrones and dominions, principalities and powers.<sup>8</sup> Their facility of movement and executive power will fully appear in the treatment of the offices which they fulfill.

5. *All Originally Holy.*—The position, that all angels were originally holy, requires little more than its simple statement as a fact. Only some form of Manicheism could oppose to it any contradiction. The holiness of the divine Creator determines the primitive

<sup>1</sup> Luke ii, 9-14.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. i, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xv, 10.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Sam. xiv, 17, 20.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Pet. ii, 11.

<sup>6</sup> Psa. ciii, 20.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Thess. i, 7.

<sup>8</sup> Col. i, 16.

holiness of all personal orders. The angels must be included in the characterization of newly created existences as "very good."<sup>1</sup> They must have been good in their kind, and therefore, as persons morally constituted, must have been holy in their nature. Consistently with this fact, and in further proof of it, evil angels are such only by apostasy.

## II. THE GOOD ANGELS.

1. *A Great Multitude.*—Of course there are no data for an exact or even approximate enumeration of the holy angels. The statements of Scripture, however, assure us that they are a great multitude. We read of "thousands upon thousands,"<sup>2</sup> and of "thousand thousands," and "ten thousand times ten thousand,"<sup>3</sup> and of "the voice of many angels round about the throne," in number "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands."<sup>4</sup> These are definite numbers with an indefinite sense, but clearly with the sense of a great multitude.

2. *Ever Loyal to God and Duty.*—By the goodness of angels we mean more than their primitive holiness. That was simply a quality of their nature, with spontaneous tendencies toward holy activities. Goodness is the creation of such activities. On the ground of a holy nature there is constructed a holy character. The moral activities, with the intensities of thought and affection, are ever in loyalty to God and duty. Such is the meaning of their characterization, often repeated, as "the holy angels." In all the allotments of duty, as recorded in the Scripture, and whatever the service, there is ever a prompt and hearty fulfillment. They ever keep the commandments of the Lord, and do his pleasure.<sup>5</sup> The same truth appears in the petition of our Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done in earth, as in heaven."<sup>6</sup> They worship God with all the intensities of adoring love.<sup>7</sup>

3. *In Social and Organic Compact.*—The angels are in no sense a race, but a company, or companies, each individual being an original creation. Hence the grounds of social affinity arising out of our own race relations are entirely wanting in them. It does not follow that they are without social affinity, for there are other sufficient grounds of such affinity. Our own sensibilities go beyond our race relations and embrace all that is orderly and beautiful. That there is no social result is simply from the lack of rational and sympathetic response in such forms of order and beauty. There is no such hinderance in the relation of angels. There is

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i, 31.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. lxxviii, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Dan. vii, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. v, 11.

<sup>5</sup> Psa. ciii, 20, 21.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. vi, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. iv, 8-11.

between them a mutual apprehension of all that is pure and good and lofty, and a reciprocal response of loving sympathy. In this there is ample ground for social compact. Beyond this, God is for them a center of loving union. As all are bound to him in a supreme love, so are they bound to each other in loving fellowship. This accords with the view of the angels in which the Scriptures place them.

Beyond this social life, the angels are in economical compact. DISTINCTION OF ORDERS. There are terms which plainly signify a distinction of orders. Such are the terms thrones, dominions, principalities, powers.<sup>1</sup> There may be higher and lower grades in the scale of being. There is no law which should determine an absolute equality. All the analogies of creation suggest gradations among the angels. However this may be, these terms of distinction do imply organic compact. The angels are the Lord's hosts.<sup>2</sup> This form of expression occurs with frequent repetition, and contains the idea of a military organization. Then we have the names of Gabriel and Michael, who appear among the angels in matchless greatness, and with the investment of rectoral functions. Gabriel appears in his greatness to Daniel, with the interpretation of his vision;<sup>3</sup> and also brings the salutation to Mary.<sup>4</sup> Michael as a great prince stands up for the people of God;<sup>5</sup> rebukes the devil in the name of the Lord;<sup>6</sup> and with his angels fights against the dragon.<sup>7</sup> Thus he appears with princely powers, and in command of a host of angels. The group of facts which we have presented suffices for the proposition that the angels exist in forms of organic compact.

4. *Ministry of the Good Angels.*—The idea of service or ministry is given in the appellative sense of angel. The representation of the good angels throughout the Scriptures is replete with this idea. Only an elaborate treatment could compass the question of their ministry; and such a discussion would encounter many perplexities. The leading facts, and about all that can be instructive and useful, may be very briefly given.

In the history of opinion on this question extreme views often appear. EXTREME VIEWS. The government of the world is mostly placed in the hands of angels. Nearly all events which specially concern us are the work of their agency. Every man has his own guardian angel. Each nation has a presiding angel, and each planet and star. These views exaggerate the powers and offices of the angels. Natural events are thus accounted supernat-

<sup>1</sup> Col. i, 16.<sup>2</sup> Psa. cxlviii, 2.<sup>3</sup> Dan. viii.<sup>4</sup> Luke i, 26-28.<sup>5</sup> Dan. xii, 1.<sup>6</sup> Jude 9.<sup>7</sup> Rev. xii, 7.

ural and assigned to an inadequate agency. The Scriptures do not warrant the opinion of such a ministry of angels; the alleged proofs are inconclusive.

It is true, as previously shown, that Michael appeared as a prince in behalf of the Hebrews; but this was in the time of their captivity, and in a crisis of profound interest, and may have been only for this exigency. Hence the opinion of a permanent presidency is without warrant. Advocates of these extreme views go much further. They find in the same book mention of the princes of Persia and Grecia,<sup>1</sup> and infer that they were the presiding angels of these nations, just as Michael was the presiding angel of the Hebrews. If such princes were angels in fact the inference of a permanent presidency would not follow, just as it does not in the instance of Michael. Much less would the inference of a common presidency of angels over nations follow. Further, there is no proof that the princes of Persia and Grecia were angels. Respecting the former, Clarke says: "I think it would go far to make a legend or a precarious tale of this important place to endeavor to maintain that either a good or evil angel is intended here."<sup>2</sup> As against the above views it should further be noted that both Gabriel and Michael fulfilled offices among the Hebrews, and also in Persia. These facts are inconsistent with the idea of one guardian angel for each nation, and particularly with the idea that the prince of Persia was an angel; for in such a case we must find the angel of the Hebrews in diplomatic intercourse with the angel of Persia. This implication is not in itself credible. It is specially discredited by the fact that the prince of Persia maintained a sharp contention against Gabriel and Michael.<sup>3</sup> Surely he could not have been a good angel. Hence all proof that each nation has its guardian angel entirely fails.

The alleged proof that each person, or even that each believer, has his own guardian angel, is far short of conclusive. One of such proofs is the text respecting the little ones whose angels behold the face of the Father in heaven.<sup>4</sup> The sense given by Dr. Hodge is all that the passage will warrant: "It does teach that children have guardian angels; that is, that angels watch over their welfare. But it does not prove that each child, or each believer, has his own guardian angel."<sup>5</sup> Another text alleged in proof is entirely without force. It is the text respecting the angel which liberated Peter from the prison. When

RESPECTING  
MICHAEL AND  
GABRIEL.

NO INDIVIDUAL  
GUARDIAN-  
SHIP.

<sup>1</sup> Dan. x, 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Commentary*, Dan. x, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Dan. x, 13, 20, 21.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xviii, 10.

<sup>5</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. i, p. 640.

the friends in prayer at the house of Mary, the mother of John, could not dissuade the damsel from her conviction that Peter was at the gate, they said, "It is his angel."<sup>1</sup> These words do not necessarily mean that Peter had constantly a guardian angel; much less that every believer has. Further, even if such were the sense of the words, it must be noted that they are not the words of inspired persons, and hence are wholly without doctrinal value.

There still remains much respecting the ministry of the good angels. A glance at their appearances and agency in sacred history may help our view of their offices in the work of providence and in the economies of religion. The angels are the morning stars and sons of God who rejoice over the work of creation.<sup>2</sup> They often appear in the scenes of patriarchal history as the messengers of God and in the execution of important offices in behalf of his servants. They participated in the publication of the law from Sinai.<sup>3</sup> They ever wait on the commandments of God in the spirit of obedience.<sup>4</sup> "They predicted and celebrated the birth of Christ (Matt. i, 20; Luke i, 11); they ministered to him in his temptation and sufferings (Matt. iv, 11; Luke xxii, 43); and they announced his resurrection and ascension (Matt. xxviii, 2; John xx, 12; Acts i, 10, 11). They are still ministering spirits to believers (Heb. i, 14); they delivered Peter from prison; they watch over children (Matt. xviii, 10); they bear the souls of the departed to Abraham's bosom (Luke xvi, 22); they are to attend Christ at his second coming, and gather his people into his kingdom (Matt. xiii, 39; xvi, 27; xxiv, 31). Such are the general statements of the Scriptures on this subject, and with these we should be content. We know that they are the messengers of God; that they are now and ever have been employed in executing his commissions, but further than this nothing is positively revealed."<sup>5</sup>

### III.—THE EVIL ANGELS.

1. *Evil by Apostasy*.—As previously pointed out, all personal and morally constituted existences are originally created in holiness; that is, with a moral nature in harmony with their moral relations, and spontaneously responsive to the requirements of moral duty. This accords with all the relative facts of Scripture, and is guaranteed by the holiness and goodness of the Creator. How could such persons sin? This question is sure to arise. It is not clear of perplexity, yet not wholly in the dark.

QUESTION OF  
THE SINNING.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xii, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Job xxxviii, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iii, 19; Heb. ii, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Psa. ciii, 20, 21.

<sup>5</sup> Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, vol. i, pp. 639, 640.

The same question arose in connection with the fall of man. It is specially in that view that it is not wholly in the dark. The original constitution of man, even with subjective holiness, left him open to temptation through his sensibilities, and therefore with the possibility of sinning. For any light on the question respecting the apostasy of angels we require the supposition of a constitutional susceptibility to temptation in them. The supposition is not unreasonable, although the mode of such susceptibility in them is hidden from us, while it is quite open in the case of man.

The existence of evil angels carries with it the fact of apostasy. That there are evil angels is one of the clear truths of Scripture. With equal clearness the Scriptures account EVIL ONLY BY APOSTASY. their evil character to an original apostasy. They are described as the angels that sinned, and also as the angels who kept not their first estate or principality, but left their own habitation.<sup>1</sup> These facts constitute an apostasy of angels. When this apostasy occurred we know not. Nor is the number made known. It was the quaint opinion of Anselm that the number of the fallen angels was exactly replaced by the number of the elect out of the human race; but there is no light upon the question in this fanciful view.

2. *The Evil One.*—The existence of a chief apostate angel is equally a truth of the Scriptures. Various names are assigned him: Devil—calumniator, slanderer, accuser; Satan—the Adversary; Prince of darkness, Beelzebub, Deceiver, Serpent, Dragon, with still other terms expressive of his evil nature and work. This chief apostate is also frequently called *ὁ πονηρός*—the Evil One.<sup>2</sup> There is no other name which better expresses his inner nature, none in which all his evil traits more completely center.

On the ground of Scripture the existence of the devil, with other apostate spirits, must be admitted. The words of TRUTH OF HIS EXISTENCE. Christ and his apostles, in which this truth lies, cannot be explained away on the principle of accommodation to the common Jewish faith on this question. “Nor can it be said that Jesus and his apostles merely *left* men in their belief, not thinking it worth while to undeceive them, and trusting that in time they would of themselves discover their mistake. On the contrary, our Lord and his followers very decidedly and strongly *confirm* the doctrine by numerous express declarations. For instance, our Lord, in his explanation of ‘the parable of the tares and the wheat,’ says expressly that the enemy who sows the tares is the devil.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. ii, 4; Jude 6.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii, 19; Eph. vi, 16; 1 John ii, 13; iii, 12; v, 18.

And again, in explaining that portion of the parable of the sower, in which it is said that the birds devoured the seed that fell on the trodden way-side, he says, 'Then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts,' etc. And there are very many other passages in which our Lord and his apostles do not merely leave uncontradicted, or merely assent to, what is said by others as to this point, or merely allude to it incidentally, but go out of their way, as it were, to assert the doctrine most distinctly, and earnestly dwell on it.<sup>1</sup> If, therefore, the belief in evil spirits is altogether a vulgar error, it certainly is not an error which Jesus and his apostles merely neglected to correct, or which they merely connived at, but which they decidedly inculcated."<sup>2</sup>

When Satan fell from his high and holy estate, or by what peculiar form of psychological movement, we know not. It seems plain that it preceded the creation and trial of man, but beyond this all is to us unknown. We have little insight into the sensibilities of spiritual beings without a physical organism like our own. Sensibilities are clearly possible to such beings, and must be actual in their personal constitution—must be, because without them personality itself is impossible. It has been a common opinion that the mental movement of Satan through which he fell was in the form of ambition or pride. This would include an activity of the sensibilities, for there can be neither without them. The ground for this common opinion is in the words of Paul respecting what a bishop should be and should not be: "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."<sup>3</sup> These words are interpreted to mean such a condemnation for ambition or pride as the devil himself incurred. This sense does not seem foreign to the words; yet a single text of the kind is hardly sufficient for any doctrinal determination.

3. *Demoniacal Possession.*—Demoniacs repeatedly appear in the narratives of the New Testament, and with various forms of mental and bodily disease, which are attributed to the agency of evil spirits, mostly named *δαμόνια*. In the case of demoniacs, evil spirits take possession of the subject, and act upon it from within, not from without. The action is upon either body or mind, and often upon both at the same time. In some instances

<sup>1</sup> Respecting "the very many other passages," the author cites a number, which we give by reference: John viii, 44; 1 Tim. iii, 6; 2 Tim. ii, 26; Heb. ii, 14; 1 Pet. v, 8; 1 John iii, 8; Rev. xx, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Whately: *Good and Evil Angels*, pp. 65, 66.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. iii, 6.



the very center of the personality seems to be seized and held, so that all the action of the subject is attributable to the possessing demon or demons.

The results appear in various forms of mental and bodily disease, according to the mode of the demoniacal agency. Many of the specially notable miracles of our Lord and his disciples were wrought in the curing of such cases. We give a few instances by reference, which also will represent the forms of disease resulting from such possession.<sup>1</sup>

The reality of demoniacal possession was the common Jewish faith at the time of our Lord. The most rationalistic interpreters of Scripture will not question this fact. If any one thinks such faith distinctively Jewish he greatly mistakes the facts in the case. That faith pervades the theology of the Gentiles, particularly of the Greeks and Romans.

In the drift of rationalistic theology objections arose against the doctrine of demoniacal possession. Strenuous attempts were made to displace it and to interpret the Scriptures consistently with its denial. The method of this endeavor was determined by unquestionable facts in the case. One of these facts is that the Jews of the time firmly believed the doctrine; another, that our Lord and his disciples treated the instances of alleged possession precisely as if such possession were a reality. This fact is so open and above question that no advance could be made on the ground of its denial. This endeavor therefore necessarily proceeded upon a principle previously noticed—that of accommodation to the common faith of the people. This faith was a delusion, and our Lord and his disciples knew that it was a delusion, but did not think it important to correct it. Time would make the correction; therefore they treated these cases just as though they were instances of real possession.

Such an interpretation is irreconcilable with the facts concerned, and must be at the sacrifice of the integrity and trustworthiness of our Lord and his apostles and evangelists as religious teachers. The truth of this proposition must appear in the light of the facts. In one instance the subjects of Christ's healing represent various forms of disease—divers diseases and torments, cases of lunacy and palsy, and with the rest demoniacs.<sup>2</sup> If there was no reality in the demoniacal cases why should

<sup>1</sup> Matt. viii, 28-32; ix, 32, 33; xii, 22; xvii, 14-18; Mark i, 23-26; Luke xiii, 11-16; Acts xvi, 16-18.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iv, 24.

such distinction be made and perpetuated in the Gospel? How could this be honestly done? Our Lord himself makes a like distinction in his charge to his apostles: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons."<sup>1</sup> And this goes into the sacred record. The seventy evangelists return from their mission, "saying, Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through thy name."<sup>2</sup> The answer of Christ responds to the truth of their words. If the demons existed only in imagination why this mutual recognition of them as realities? The demons possess personal qualities and exercise personal agency. They know Jesus as the Son of God and the Messiah.<sup>3</sup> There is interlocution between Christ and these evil spirits, and such as would be impossible with the subject of their possession.<sup>4</sup> He commands their action just as though they were personal agents.<sup>5</sup>

Their number emphasizes their meaning respecting the present question. A few instances might not be decisive; but their great number, with their character as above given, is conclusive of demoniacal possession. Our Lord and his disciples could not in all these instances proceed in accommodation to the popular faith, while knowing that faith to be groundless. In many instances there was no reason for such accommodation; not any excuse for it. Nor could that principle justify the narration of such instances in the gospels in the same manner as if cases of real demoniacal possession.

Two instances are regarded as specially decisive of this issue: the temptation of our Lord in the wilderness<sup>6</sup> and the case of the Gadarene.<sup>7</sup> In the former the devil is the immediate agent in the temptation, but not in the mode of possession; for he had no such power over the Christ. But while differing in these respects the case equally proves the existence of an evil spirit, operative in the mode of personal agency. In the case of the Gadarene the agency of the evil spirits is operative not only in the madman, but also in the herd of swine. These instances cannot be referred to superstition, or a lawless imagination, or a diseased brain. "The possession of the herd of swine by the demons, and the temptation of the Son of God, are the two cases which—I observed—preclude all such explanation, and which were doubtless recorded, partly, for that very purpose. Whatever effects may be produced in *men* by a diseased imagination, the brute

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Mark i, 24; Luke iv, 41.

<sup>5</sup> Mark i, 25, 34; iii, 11, 12; ix, 25.

<sup>7</sup> Luke viii, 26-36.

<sup>2</sup> Luke x, 17.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. viii, 29-32.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. iv, 1-11.

animals, in the one case, were as much *below* that influence as, in the other case, the Son of God was *above* it."<sup>1</sup>

If a real agency of evil spirits is denied, the miracles of Christ in the cure of demoniacs lose their deepest meaning. Indeed, they are not only minified, but brought into uncertainty by the elimination of this vital element. There is nothing clearer in the narratives than the demoniacal agency, and if we deny that we may deny the whole account. In every case their profound significance for the power of Christ over the powers of evil against which we must contend is entirely lost.

There is perplexity for thought in the idea of demoniacal possession. This is readily conceded; but the denial of such possession involves still greater perplexity respecting the interpretation of Scripture and the trustworthiness of Christ and his disciples as religious teachers. The existence of the devil and his angels, as an evil power, is clearly the sense of Scripture. From the beginning that power has ever been active for the moral ruin of man. The mission of Christ for the redemption of the race required the overthrow of this power. This was a leading purpose of his incarnation and death.<sup>2</sup> These evil spirits well knew this purpose, and naturally were stimulated to the utmost stretch of energy against its achievement. It may be that instances of demoniacal possession were temporarily permitted, that the power of Christ over this power of evil might be signalized.

The reality of such instances at that time is no proof of present instances. The rational inference is that they began and ceased with the special occasion of their permission. There is no evidence that those possessed of evil spirits were themselves monsters of wickedness; nor were they personally demonized by this possession. Yet it was to them a grievous affliction, and must take its place with other instances which Providence permits, for sufficient reasons to the divine mind, however hidden from our own. We have some explanation in the purpose of this permission as above stated, just as the sore affliction of the family which Jesus loved has some explanation in its gracious purpose.<sup>3</sup> As through this affliction the Father and the Son were glorified, and the faith of the disciples most fully assured, so through this permission of demoniacal possession the power of Christ over the powers of evil was specially signalized. The seventy returned from their mission, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through thy

PERPLEXITIES  
OF THE QUES-  
TION.

NO PROOF OF  
PRESENT IN-  
STANCES.

THE POWER OF  
CHRIST SIG-  
NALIZED.

<sup>1</sup> Whately: *Good and Evil Angels*, pp. 127, 128.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. ii, 14, 15.

<sup>3</sup> John xi, 4, 5, 15.

name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”<sup>1</sup> Further, in replying to the accusation, that he was an agent of Beelzebub, he said with emphasis, “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.”<sup>2</sup> With the reality of demoniacal possession these miracles of Christ reveal his transcendent power and assure us of his triumph over all the powers of evil.<sup>3</sup>

There has been a strong reaction from the rationalistic drift of German thinking which denied the existence of evil spirits. Dorner gives this testimony: “Therefore also the most noteworthy theologians after Schleiermacher have not agreed with him upon this point. Even Lücke and Romang are not opposed to the supposition of fallen evil spirits, although they reject the possibility of an absolutely evil person or an absolutely evil kingdom. Nitzsch, Twesten, Rothe, Julius Müller, Tholuck, Lange, Martensen, as well as Thomasius, Hoffman, Kahnis, Philippi, and Luthardt, avow that not merely is sin found in humanity, but that a kingdom of evil spirits with a head over them is also to be inculcated. Romang rightly satirizes the fond enlightenment which takes much credit to itself for being above this representation.”<sup>4</sup>

4. *Work of the Devil and his Angels.*—In the words of our Lord we have the phrase, “the devil and his angels.”<sup>5</sup> In this realm of evil the devil is chief and evil spirits are under his leadership, and execute his commands. In this sense they are his angels. There may also be an implicit reference to the original apostasy on the supposition that these subordinate spirits followed the devil in his revolt from God. The formula implies an organic union of evil spirits. There are other forms of expression which give the same sense. The devil is the prince of the power of the air.<sup>6</sup> There are principalities and powers of evil, rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places, evil spirits, in distinction from men, against which we must contend.<sup>7</sup> The idea of a realm of evil spirits, with the headship of the devil, runs through these forms of expression.

The work of the devil and his angels is such as their evil nature prompts—within the limit of their power, or of the divine permission. They are not free from the divine restraint. It follows that what may be possible to them at one

<sup>1</sup> Luke x, 17, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xii, 28.

<sup>3</sup> Whately: *Good and Evil Angels*, pp. 112-116.

<sup>4</sup> *System of Christian Doctrine*, vol. iii, p. 96.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxv, 41.    <sup>6</sup> Eph. ii, 2.    <sup>7</sup> Eph. vi, 12; Col. i, 13; ii, 15.

time is not so at another. Demoniacal possession may still be possible to their own powers, but not possible under the divine restraint. There are other modes in which evil spirits may work evil. They are actuated by a common impulse of hatred against God and man. This appears in the whole history of their agency. A central purpose, springing from their malignance, is to compass the moral ruin of the race. Their method is to lead man into sin and to counterwork the means of his salvation. This appears in the temptation of Eve ;<sup>1</sup> in the temptation of our Lord in the wilderness ;<sup>2</sup> in the seduction of Judas into his work of betrayal ;<sup>3</sup> in the power of darkness, which may well signify the rulers of the darkness, and their rage against our Lord in the hour providentially permitted to his murderers ;<sup>4</sup> in the sowing of tares among the good seed ;<sup>5</sup> in catching away the word of the kingdom before it can become profitable.<sup>6</sup>

The mode of this evil agency in its enticements to sin, and in counterworking the gracious means of our salvation, is MODE OF EVIL AGENCY. hidden from our insight. It has no coercive power over us ; for even the devil, if resisted, shall flee from us.<sup>7</sup> Such as are taken captive at his will give the consent of their own will, and may still reeover themselves out of his snare.<sup>7</sup> The agency of evil spirits must, for any practical result, in some way act upon such forms of our sensibility as shall, when thus quickened into activity, withstand the good or become an enticement to the evil. Herein lies the mystery of the question, Have they immediate access to our sensibilities, or must they act through some means, just as any one of us must act in moving the sensibilities of another ? We have no unqualified answer to this question. However, this evil agency is not incredible because its mode is a mystery. We know the means by which one man moves the sensibilities of another ; but when we go below the means to inquire in what mode the effect is produced we are quite as much in the dark as in any inquiry respecting the mode in which evil spirits act upon our sensibilities.

5. *Final Overthrow.*—The beginning of the Gospel was in the promise of a seed which should bruise the head of the serpent.<sup>8</sup> This promise, so veiled at the time, has unfolded into the fullness of the Gospel. The mission of the Son of God, as thus foreshadowed, was for the purpose of destroying the devil and his works.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii, 1-6.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iv, 1-11.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xxii, 3, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xxii, 53 ; Eph. vi, 12.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xiii, 39.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xiii, 19.

<sup>7</sup> James iv, 7.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Tim. ii, 26.

<sup>9</sup> Gen. iii, 15.

<sup>10</sup> Heb. ii, 14 ; 1 John iii, 8.

For the accomplishment of this purpose he is invested with all authority and power; and all enemies shall be put under his feet.<sup>1</sup> So shall he suppress the devil and his angels as a power of evil.

Wesley: *On Good and Evil Angels*, Sermons, lxxvi, lxxvii; Dunn: *The Angels of God*; Duke: *The Holy Angels*; Whateley: *Concerning Good and Evil Angels*; Clayton: *Angelology*; Matson: *Satanology*.

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## III.

## ARMINIAN TREATMENT OF ORIGINAL SIN.

i, 521.

WE have attempted the right treatment of this subject in our Anthropology. The present view is historical; the aim, to show how it has usually been treated. The facts which appear in this review must be its justification.

## I. THE QUESTION IN ARMINIANISM.

1. *A Common Adamic Sin.*—By a common Adamic sin we mean a sin of the race through a participation in the sin of Adam; that the guilt of his sin is native to every soul. This view is far more common in Arminian theology than that of a sin of the corrupt nature with which we are born.

After a definite statement of the personal sin of Adam and Eve, and of its penal consequences to themselves, Arminius DOCTRINE OF ARMINIUS. proceeds: "The whole of this sin, however, is not peculiar to our first parents, but is common to the entire race and to all their posterity, who, at the time when this sin was committed, were in their loins, and who have since descended from them by the natural mode of propagation, according to the primitive benediction. For in Adam 'all have sinned' (Rom. v, 12). Wherefore, whatever punishment was brought down upon our first parents has likewise pervaded and yet pursues all their posterity. So that all men 'are by nature the children of wrath' (Eph. ii, 3), obnoxious to condemnation and to temporal as well as eternal death; they are also devoid of that original righteousness and true holiness (Rom. v, 12, 18, 19). With these evils they would remain oppressed forever unless they were liberated by Christ Jesus; to whom be glory forever."<sup>1</sup> This is the doctrine of native guilt and damnableness through a participation in the sin of Adam. The sense of the passage is clear in its own terms, and clear beyond question when read in the light of what immediately precedes respecting the sin of Adam and its judicial consequences to himself. In this view we are all sharers in the guilt of Adam's personal sin, and this guilt is the judicial ground, not only of the corruption of nature or spiritual death in which we are born, but also of our

<sup>1</sup> Writings, vol. i, p. 486.

native amenability to the penalty of temporal and eternal death. There is in all this no recognition of any demerit of the common depravity or corruption of nature in which we are born, but rather its exclusion; for as this depravity is itself held to be a penal infliction it could not with any consistency be admitted to contain the desert of punishment. The ground of participation in the sin of our progenitors is not formally stated, but is informally indicated in the account made of our being in their loins at the time of their sinning. This is the realistic ground in distinction from the representative.

There are numerous passages from the hand of Wesley which express the same form or sense of original sin that we have found in the words of Arminius. In replying to an argument of Taylor against original sin, that only Adam and Eve could be justly punishable for their sin, Wesley says: "If no other was justly punishable, then no other was punished for that transgression. But all were punished for that transgression, namely, with death. Therefore, all were justly punished for it."<sup>1</sup> He then cites with full approval the following words of Dr. Jennings: "And, since it is so plain that all men are actually punished for Adam's sin, it must needs follow that they 'all sinned in Adam. By one man's disobedience many were made sinners.' They were so constituted sinners by Adam's sinning as to become liable to the punishment threatened to his transgression."<sup>2</sup> In replying to another argument of Taylor that "no just constitution can punish the innocent," Wesley says: "This is undoubtedly true; therefore God does not look upon infants as innocent, but as involved in the guilt of Adam's sin; otherwise death, the punishment denounced against that sin, could not be inflicted upon them."<sup>3</sup> These citations clearly express the view of Wesley that we all share the guilt of Adam's sin and are justly amenable to its punishment. There is no indication of the ground on which he based this common Adamic sin, or whether the realistic or the representative.

On this question Fletcher is in accord with Arminius and Wesley. He holds the common guilt of the race through a participation in the sin of Adam. This appears in his doctrine of infant justification through the grace of the atonement. This grace is universal and the justification unconditional. But the justification is the cancellation of sin in the sense of demerit or guilt, and therefore implies such form of native sin. Our native sinfulness in the distinctly ethical sense of demerit, as held

<sup>1</sup> Works, vol. v, p. 526.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 535.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 577.



by Fletcher, is more than an implication thus reached ; it is openly expressed and traced to its ground in the sin of Adam. In view of the greatness of Christ in comparison with Adam he argues thus : " It follows that as Adam brought a general condemnation and a universal seed of death upon all infants, so Christ brings upon them a general justification and a universal seed of life. . . . And if Adam's original sin was atoned for and forgiven him, as the Calvinists, I think, generally grant, does it not follow that, although all infants are by nature children of wrath, yet through the redemption of Christ they are in a state of favor or justification ? For how could God damn to all eternity any of Adam's children for a sin which Christ expiated—a sin which was forgiven almost six thousand years ago to Adam, who committed it in person ? The force of this observation would strike our Calvinist brethren if they considered that we were not less in Adam's loins when God gave his Son to Adam in the grand, original gospel promise, than when Eve prevailed on him to eat of the forbidden fruit. . . . Thus, if we all received an unspeakable injury by being seminally in Adam when he fell, according to the first covenant, we all received also an unspeakable blessing by being in his loins when God spiritually raised him up and placed him upon gospel ground."<sup>1</sup> For the present we are concerned with Fletcher's view of our native sinfulness, and not with his doctrine of a universal justification any further than it may serve to explain the former. That we all share the guilt of Adam's sin, the sin which he personally committed, is the clear sense of the passage cited. It is implied in the nature of the infant justification maintained, and appears in the forms of plain statement. Fletcher sets forth the same doctrine in citations from the articles, homilies, and liturgy of the Church of England.<sup>2</sup> The ground of the common guilt of Adam's sin, in this view of Fletcher, is the realistic in distinction from the representative. There is no intimation of a sin of our nature in the sense of demerit or guilt.

Watson is still our own most honored name in systematic theology, and his view of the native sinfulness of the race must not be overlooked. In his anthropology and in his discussion of the doctrinal issues between Calvinism and Arminianism he had special occasion for the treatment of this question. The discussion required the adjustment of his doctrine of native sinfulness to the Arminian system, and also its defense against Calvinistic implications. The attempt was not shunned ; and whatever Arminians may think of its success, it is no special surprise

<sup>1</sup> Works, vol. i, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 255-257.

that from the Calvinistic side it is viewed as conceding the ground of election and reprobation.

On the typical relation of Adam to Christ, as set forth by Paul, Watson says: "The same apostle also adopts the phrases, 'the first Adam' and 'the second Adam,' which mode of speaking can only be explained on the ground that as sin and death descended from one, so righteousness and life flow from the other; and that what Christ is to all his spiritual seed, that Adam is to all his natural descendants."<sup>1</sup> This must mean the penal subjection of the race to spiritual, physical, and eternal death on account of the sin of Adam. Not only the terms of the passage, but its connection and the ruling idea of the discussion surely determine this sense. On the institution of the Edenic probation with Adam and Eve, Watson says: "The circumstances of the case infallibly show that, in the whole transaction, they stood before their Maker as *public persons* and as the legal *representatives* of their descendants, though in so many words they are not invested with these titles."<sup>2</sup>

This is simply the Calvinistic doctrine of the legal oneness of the race with Adam on the principle of representation and the just amenability of every one to the full penalty of his sin. Exceptions are taken to the Calvinistic doctrine in two points: "It asserts, indeed, the imputation of the actual commission of Adam's sin to his descendants, which is false in fact; makes us stand chargeable with the full latitude of his transgression and all its attendant circumstances; and constitutes us, separate from all actual voluntary offense, equally guilty with him, all which are repugnant equally to our consciousness and to the equity of the case."<sup>3</sup> The representative theory in Calvinism no longer holds the imputation of Adam's sinful deed to his posterity, and whatever point this part of Watson's criticism might have against the realistic theory, or even against the representative theory as held when he wrote, it has no force against the latter as now held. In its present form it is not the sin of Adam as an act of personal transgression, but the guilt of his sin as an amenability to its full penalty that is imputed to his offspring. The representative character of Adam, which Mr. Watson accepts, carries with it this imputation; and against this he has no reserved ground of objection. In any case of imputation the guilt of sin is the vital fact, because it constitutes the amenability to punishment. The personal deed of Adam is quite indifferent to the imputation of its guilt as a universal amenability to the full penalty which he

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

incurred. If the economy of representation in the Adamic probation is true in fact and valid in principle, then in the vital fact of guilt we do "stand chargeable with the full latitude of his transgression," and, "separate from all actual voluntary offense, equally guilty with him," which fact itself, and without any imputation of Adam's personal deed, seems to us "repugnant equally to our consciousness and to the equity of the case."

With the repudiation of an extreme, and now obsolete, form of imputation, Mr. Watson still adheres to the economy of Adamic representation in all that properly belongs to it. He holds it as presented in the interpretation of Dr. Watts.<sup>1</sup> In this interpretation it is doctrinally one with the present Calvinistic theory of Adamic representation. In the primitive probation Adam represented the race, and on the ground of that representation the penalty of his sin falls upon them as upon himself. Watson goes into detail, and points out the three forms of death which are thus penally consequent to the imputation of Adam's sin: physical, spiritual, and eternal death. He does not pause even at the last. "The third consequence is *eternal death*, separation from God, and endless banishment from his glory in a future state. This follows from both the above premises—from the federal character of Adam, and from the eternal life given by Christ being opposed by the apostle to the death derived from Adam."<sup>2</sup> Thus all are subject to the full penalty of Adam's sin. Infants are thus subject: "The fact of their being born liable to death, a part of the penalty, is sufficient to show that they were born under the whole malediction."<sup>3</sup> The discussion of this point is thus concluded: "Having thus established the import of the *death* threatened as the penalty of Adam's transgression to include corporal, moral, or spiritual and eternal death, and showed that the sentence included also the whole of his posterity, our next step is," etc.<sup>4</sup> This is the doctrine of a common native condemnation and damnableness through a participation in the sin of Adam as legal representative of the race in the primitive probation. There is no recognition of any realistic oneness of the race with Adam, nor of a sin of our nature in the sense of punitive desert.

In Dr. Pope's discussion of original sin there is the sense of a common hereditary guilt or condemnation in consequence of the Adamic connection of the race. "Hereditary guilt is not expressly stated in the form of a proposition: the phrase is of later than scriptural origin. But when St. Paul

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, pp. 53-55.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

establishes the connection between sin and death as its comprehensive penalty he teaches that the condemnation of the first sin reigns over all mankind as in some sense one with Adam."<sup>1</sup> In the elaboration of this summary statement of doctrine the same sense is repeatedly expressed. The words of Paul in Rom. v, 12, are interpreted as "asserting that in divine imputation all, in some sense, sinned originally in Adam. . . . They sinned in Adam, though not guilty of the act of his sin: this, then, is hereditary condemnation on those who were not personal transgressors and on them all."<sup>2</sup>

The above citations, to which many of like meaning might be added, clearly assert a universal guilt and condemnation through a participation in the sin of Adam, but are quite indefinite as to the mode of that participation. It is true that in the denial of any sharing of the race in his sinful deed the higher realism, such as Shedd maintains, is logically excluded; but beyond this there is all the indefiniteness which lies in the words, "that in divine imputation all, in some sense, sinned originally in Adam." Yet a question so prominent in doctrinal anthropology could not be omitted by such a writer as Dr. Pope, and in several places his views are given. We cannot think him entirely self-consistent, for, as we understand his terms, his theory of the Adamic connection of the race in the Edenic probation is sometimes the realistic, and sometimes the representative. The fundamental difference of these theories, as we have elsewhere shown, precludes consistency in the holding of both. "The nature is condemned, and yet it is universally redeemed. However difficult it may be, we must receive the fact of a human nature, abstracted from the persons who inherit it, lost and marred in Adam and found or retrieved in Christ."<sup>3</sup> "The sin of Adam was expiated as representing the sin of the race as such, or of human nature, or of mankind: a realistic conception which was not borrowed from philosophic realism, and which no nominalism can ever really dislodge from the New Testament."<sup>4</sup> The ruling ideas of these citations belong to the realistic mode of the Adamic connection of the race as the ground of native sinfulness; nor can they be interpreted consistently with any other theory. "Original sin sprang from the federal constitution of the race: one in the unity of the unlimited many."<sup>5</sup> This is clearly and definitely the representative mode of a common Adamic guilt. In the use and meaning of

<sup>1</sup> Pope: *Christian Theology*, vol. ii, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> *Wesley Memorial Volume*, art. "Methodist Doctrine," by Dr. Pope, pp. 177, 178. Cited in Summer's *Theology*, vol. ii, p. 43.

<sup>5</sup> Pope: *Christian Theology*, vol. ii, p. 62.

terms, as clearly seen in the history of doctrinal anthropology, the federal constitution of the race means that Adam was divinely constituted the legal representative of his offspring, and that on this ground all are justly involved in the guilt and punishment of his sin.

In addition to these irreconcilable modes of a common Adamic guilt, Dr. Pope holds the intrinsic sinfulness of the corruption of nature with which we are born. Against the Romish doctrine, that concupiscence in the baptized is not of the nature of sin, he controversially says: "As if baptism could make that which is essentially sinful cease to be such; as if the perversion of the will, which constitutes us formally sinners as soon as we feel and assent to its operation, were not in itself sinful. . . . The current Romanist doctrine denies that men are born into the world with anything subjective in them of the strict nature of sin. . . . In virtue of this principle the true doctrine is opposed also to every account of sin which insists that it cannot be reckoned such by a righteous God save when the will actively consents; and that none can be held responsible for any state of soul or action of life which is not the result of the posture of the will at the time. There is an offending character behind the offending will."<sup>1</sup> Both the controversial issues of these passages and the principles which they assert must mean a sinfulness of the common native depravity in the sense of punitive desert. That Dr. Pope holds this doctrine he has placed beyond question in declaring that "Methodism accepts the article of the English Church"—the ninth, which he immediately cites.<sup>2</sup> We are not just now concerned with the historical accuracy of this statement, but simply with Dr. Pope's own view. After the characterization of the common native corruption derived from Adam, the article declares: "Therefore in every person born into the world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation." The whole article, with these words in it, is cited with manifest personal approval.

We thus find in Pope the maintenance of three distinct grounds of a common native sinfulness and damnableness. On the ground of a real oneness with Adam, and also on the ground of a representative oneness, we share the guilt and deserve the penalty of his sin. The third ground is given in the intrinsic sinfulness of the depravity of nature inherited from Adam. These views can neither be reconciled with each other nor with the determining principles of Arminianism.

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 83, 84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

THREE  
GROUNDS OF  
NATIVE SIN.

In the work of Dr. Summers both the realistic and representative modes of a common Adamic sin are rejected and dismissed as unworthy of disputation.<sup>1</sup> One is a little surprised at this summary method, in view of the prominence of these theories in doctrinal anthropology, and especially in view of the fact that both, as we have seen in recent citations, are accepted by leading Arminian theologians. Elsewhere the representative economy is accepted. On the Adamic relation of the race as the source of original or birth sin Summers says: "The human species is viewed as a solidarity, and it is represented by its head, commonly called its 'federal head,' because the covenant of life and death was made with him for himself and posterity."<sup>2</sup> No Calvinistic advocate of the representative theory and the immediate imputation of Adam's sin to his offspring could take any exception to such an expression of his doctrine. As read and interpreted in the light of historical anthropology it means, and must mean, the immediate imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to the race on the principle of representation.

2. *A Common Justification in Christ.*—Arminians interpret the doctrine of original or birth sin, not merely from the Adamic connection of the race, but also from its connection with the universal atonement. A common native damnableness is in itself too thoroughly Augustinian for any consistent place in the Arminian system. Hence the Arminian theologian who assumes to find such universal sinfulness in the Adamic connection of the race is sure to supplement his doctrine with the balancing or canceling grace of a free justification in Christ. In this mode it is attempted to reconcile the doctrine of native sinfulness or demerit with the fundamental principles of Arminianism, and also to void the Calvinistic assumption that it fully concedes the ground of election and reprobation. For the present we are concerned merely with the facts in the case, and not with the logical validity of the method.

Arminius defends the doctrine of his friend Borrius, that original sin will condemn no one, and that all who die in infancy are saved; that there is no future penal doom except for actual sin.<sup>3</sup> This is a great change of view from that of Arminius, previously set forth, that all so shared in the guilt of Adam's sin as to be amenable to the penalty of eternal death. What is the ground of this change? The grace of a universal atonement which freely cancels the guilt of Adamic sin: "Because God has taken the whole human race into the grace of reconcilia-

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 36, 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> *Writings*, vol. i, pp. 317-321.

tion, and has entered into a covenant of grace with Adam, and with the whole of his posterity in him."

The citation of all that Fletcher has said on this question would require much space. Referring to a prior discussion, OF FLETCHER. he says: "From Rom. v, 18, I proved the justification of infants: 'As by the offense of Adam (says the apostle) judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of Christ the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.' In support of this justification, which comes upon all men in their infancy, I now advance the following arguments."<sup>1</sup> We have no occasion to cite these arguments, as our present aim is simply to present the doctrine of Fletcher on the question of a free justification in Christ which covers the inheritance of Adamic sin. Such a doctrine he clearly maintains. The justification cancels the guilt of original sin in the case of all infants.

We have previously shown that Watson maintained a strong doctrine of original sin; that the sin of Adam as representative of the race brought upon all an amenability to the OF WATSON. threefold penalty of spiritual, physical, and eternal death. As an Arminian, however, he could not abide by this doctrine as a whole and unqualified account of man's moral state. In itself the doctrine means, not only that we are all born with the desert of God's wrath and damnation, but that all who die in infancy might forever suffer the penal doom of sin. Of course Watson repudiates the possibility of such a consequence. With other Arminians he supplements the Adamic connection of the race with its relation to the grace of a universal atonement. We must not view "the legal part of the whole transaction which affected our first parents and their posterity separately from the evangelical provision of mercy which was concurrent with it, and which included, in like manner, both them and their whole race. . . . As the question relates to the moral government of God, if one part of the transaction before us is intimately and inseparably connected with another and collateral procedure, it cannot certainly be viewed in its true light but in that connection. The redemption of man by Christ was certainly not an after-thought brought in upon man's apostasy, it was a *provision*, and when man fell he found justice hand in hand with mercy."<sup>2</sup> It is on the ground of this redemption as a part of the divine economy that Mr. Watson defends the common Adamic sinfulness against the accusation of injustice and wrong.

Any validity of such defense must assume that the grace of the

<sup>1</sup> Works, vol. i, pp. 283, 284.

<sup>2</sup> Watson: *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 56.

common redemption very materially limits or modifies the common native sinfulness. This assumption is made, and the gracious relief is set forth. The mode of this relief is not completely at one with Fletcher's view. Watson does not agree with him in the actual justification of infants. "As to infants, they are not, indeed, born justified and regenerate; so that to say that original sin is taken away, as to infants, by Christ, is not the correct view of the case, for the reason before given; but they are all born under the 'free gift,' the effects of the 'righteousness' of one, which extended to 'all men;' and this free gift is bestowed on them *in order to* justification of life, the adjudging of the condemned to live."<sup>1</sup> This provision is such that all who die in infancy must unconditionally share its grace in their salvation. This view is strongly maintained in connection with the passage just cited. In the case of adults, the blessings of grace freely offered in Christ more than balance the evil consequences of Adam's sin. "In all this it is impossible to impeach the equity of the divine procedure, since no man suffers any loss or injury ultimately by the sin of Adam, but by his own willful obstinacy—the 'abounding of grace' by Christ having placed before all men, upon their believing, not merely compensation for the loss and injury sustained by Adam, but infinitely higher blessings, both in kind and degree, than were forfeited in him."<sup>2</sup> Such is the theodicy which Watson attempts.

Dr. Pope maintains a free justification in Christ which fully covers the Adamic sin of the race. "The condemnation resting upon the race as such is removed by the virtue of the one oblation beginning with the beginning of sin. The nature of man *received the atonement* once for all; God in Christ is reconciled to the race of Adam; and no child of mankind is condemned eternally for the original offense, that is, for the fact of his being born into a condemned lineage."<sup>3</sup> Summers maintains the same doctrine. "If a decree of condemnation has been issued against original sin, irresponsibly derived from the first Adam, likewise a decree of justification has issued from the same court, whose benefits are unconditionally bestowed through the second Adam."<sup>4</sup>

We previously showed that all these authors maintained the sinfulness of the race, in the sense of penal desert, on the ground of its Adamic connection. In the citations under the present head they equally maintain a free and actual justifi-

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Theology*, vol. ii, p. 59.

<sup>4</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 39. By the editor.



cation in Christ—a justification which cancels the guilt of original sin. The result is, doctrinally, a complete freedom from the original condemnation, whether on the ground of a participation in the sin of Adam or of the corruption of nature derived from him. A qualifying exception should be made in the case of Watson. He does not hold the actual justification from the guilt of original sin, but a provisional justification in a universal atonement, which is made “*in order to*” a universal justification. While this justification must become unconditionally actual in the case of all who die in infancy, it is only conditionally available on the part of such as reach the responsibilities of probation: this is the special view of Watson. It follows, and is openly maintained, that no one can suffer final condemnation simply on the ground of Adamic sin.<sup>1</sup>

3. *Denial of Concession to Calvinism.*—On the ground of original sin as a just amenability to the divine judgment and wrath, God may graciously elect a part to salvation in Christ, and without any injustice to the rest leave them to the penal doom which their sin justly deserves. This often-uttered principle of Calvinism is well expressed in these words: “*Cum omnes homines in Adamo peccaverint, et rei sint facti maledictionis et mortis æternæ, Deus nemini fecisset injuriam, si universum genus humanum in peccato et maledictione relinquere, ac propter peccatum damnare voluisset.*”<sup>2</sup> If on the ground of original sin all men justly deserve the doom of eternal perdition, then in the election of grace God might freely choose a part to salvation in Christ, without any injustice or wrong in the reprobation or preterition of the rest, who are thereby merely delivered over to the doom which they deserve. On this ground and in this manner Calvinism assumes that the doctrine of original sin which Arminianism maintains fully concedes the ground of election and reprobation.<sup>3</sup>

Arminians who hold the strongest doctrine of original sin must dispute this concession—must, whether consistently or not. This is uniformly done. It would be easy to fill much space with citations in point, but a few will suffice. It will readily be seen that the ground on which the Calvinistic assumption is denied is the universality of the redemption in Christ. “It is an easy and plausible thing to say, in the usual loose and general way of stating the sublapsarian doctrine, that the whole race having fallen in Adam, and become justly liable

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, pp. 399, 400.

<sup>2</sup> *Canons of the Synod of Dort, Predestination.*

<sup>3</sup> Rice: *God Sovereign and Man Free*, pp. 96–106.

to eternal death, God might, without any impeachment of his justice, in the exercise of his sovereign grace, appoint some to life and salvation by Christ, and leave the others to their deserved punishment. But this is a false view of the case, built upon the false assumption that the whole race were personally and individually, in consequence of Adam's fall, absolutely liable to eternal death. That very fact, which is the foundation of the whole scheme, is easy to be refuted on the clearest authority of Scripture; while not a passage can be adduced, we may boldly affirm, which sanctions any such doctrine."<sup>1</sup> We shall see in another place the method of Watson's refutation of the Calvinistic position. "The Arminian

doctrine in its purest and best form avoided the error of the previous theories, retaining their truth. It held the Adamic unity of the race: 'in Adam all have sinned,' and 'all men are by nature the children of wrath.' But it maintained also, 'That the most gracious God has provided for all a remedy for that general evil which was delivered to us from Adam, free and gratuitous in his beloved Son Jesus Christ, as it were a new and another Adam. So that the baneful error of those is plainly apparent who are accustomed to found upon that original sin the decree of absolute reprobation invented by themselves.'"<sup>2</sup> The inner citation is from the Apology of the Remonstrants, and thus

gives the earliest Arminian view of this question, which clearly receives the approval of Dr. Pope. "Methodism clearly perceives that to admit that mankind are actually born into the world justly under condemnation is to grant the foundation of the whole Calvinistic scheme. Granted natal desert of damnation, there can be no valid objection to the sovereign election of a few out of the reprobate mass, or to limited atonement, irresistible grace, and final perseverance to secure the present and eternal salvation of the sovereignly predestinated number. . . . Representative theologians of Methodism from the beginning until now, from Fletcher to Pope, have overthrown this fundamental teaching of Calvinism with the express statement of the Scriptures, setting over against the death-dealing first Adam the life-giving second."<sup>3</sup>

## II. THE ISSUE WITH CALVINISM.

We have seen the position of Calvinism, that original sin constitutes a real and sufficient ground of election and reprobation, and also its assumption, that the Arminian doctrine of original sin fully

<sup>1</sup> Watson: *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, pp. 394, 395.

<sup>2</sup> Pope: *Christian Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 78, 79.

<sup>3</sup> Summers: *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 38, 39. By the editor.

concedes this ground. We have also seen, in a general view, the manner in which Arminians defend their doctrine against this assumption, and have given their answer in various citations. We have intimated that the method of this defense is open to review, and we take up the topic of the present section for this purpose.

1. *Underlying Principle of the Issue.*—The principle is, that original sin in the sense of demerit and damnableness is a real and sufficient ground of election and reprobation ; or, a little more exactly, that such original sin would clear the divine reprobation of a part of mankind of all injustice and wrong. This position is thoroughly valid. The purely gracious election and salvation of a part could be no injustice to the reprobate, nor could their own reprobation, as they would thereby simply be delivered over to their merited doom. There can be no injustice or wrong in the infliction of deserved penalty. Election and reprobation may still be disputed as facts, as may also the original sin which is claimed to justify the latter ; but if such universal sinfulness be a reality, then, so far as justice is concerned, the divine reprobation of a part of mankind may be thoroughly vindicated.

2. *Real Point of the Issue.*—The real point is, whether the Arminian doctrine of original sin concedes the ground of election and reprobation as maintained in Calvinism ; or, more definitely, whether Arminianism holds a form of original sin which, with the gracious election and salvation of a part of mankind, would justify the divine reprobation of the rest. Whatever may be the truth in this case, the fact of such reprobation would still be an open question. As election and reprobation are no logical implication of a sufficient ground in original sin, so the Arminian concession of such a ground could in no sense imply their actuality. Yet the concession of such a ground, or the holding a form of original sin which constitutes such a ground, would go to the dialectic advantage of Calvinism against Arminianism, because it would thoroughly void an important argument against reprobation. The whole argument against its injustice would thus be sacrificed. Whether Arminianism concedes this ground must be determined in view of its doctrine of original sin, together with its doctrine of a common justification through the grace of Christ. We are thus brought to the question of special interest in the present section.

3. *Arminian Treatment of the Issue.*—We already have the material for the required review. It was given partly in citations from Arminian theologians on original sin, partly in citations on a common infant justification in Christ, and partly in showing how they set forth this justification as the disproof of any ground of election

and reprobation in their doctrine of original sin. In the present inquiry we shall need only the ruling ideas presented under those several heads.

The doctrine of original sin maintained in the previous citations is substantially the Augustinian doctrine. Less stress is laid upon the intrinsic sinfulness and demerit of the common native depravity, though, as we have seen, this form of original sin is repeatedly asserted ; but the common sharing in the guilt of Adam's sin, and the common amenability to the penalty which he incurred in the three forms of spiritual, physical, and eternal death, receive frequent and unqualified expression. It is at this point that the Calvinist takes up the question and affirms that this doctrine of original sin concedes the ground of election and reprobation. We must say that the Calvinist is right. If through a common sharing in the sin of Adam, or on account of a sinful nature inherited from him, all are justly amenable to the penalty of eternal death, then in the election of grace God may without any injustice or wrong leave a part to their deserved doom.

The Arminian replies, that we have as yet but a part of the case ; that if there is a universal condemnation through the sin of Adam, there is also a universal justification through the grace of Christ ; that the justification cancels the condemnation. Prior citations fully verify this general statement. On the ground of this free justification it is denied that any concession is made to Calvinism in the interest of election and reprobation. This is the uniform Arminian defense, of long standing and often repeated ; so that to question its directness or sufficiency may seem rash and offensive. Yet we must think it neither direct nor sufficient ; and, more than this, that it leads to doctrinal confusion and contradiction. It does not go to the point of the issue, which is the state of the race simply from its Adamic connection. Here, as seen in previous citations, the doctrine maintained is substantially one with the Calvinistic. Here is where the Calvinist makes his point and claims that the ground of reprobation, so far as justice is concerned, is fully conceded. This is the fact in the case ; nor can its polemical fairness be questioned.

If we agree with the Calvinist on the consequence of the Adamic connection of the race, that all are thereby constituted sinners in the sense of punitive desert, there is where we ought to meet the issue—where those who hold the common Adamic sinfulness ought to meet it. Our theologians, as we have seen, refuse to do this, but interpose a common justification

THE NATIVE  
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POINT OF THE  
ISSUE.

in Christ, and on this ground dispute the Calvinistic position. The real issue is thus avoided. There are here three closely connected questions: the consequence of Adam's sin to the race; the manner in which God has actually dealt with the race as involved in that consequence; and the manner in which he might justly have dealt with it. We have seen the substantial agreement on the first question—that by the sin of Adam all are constituted sinners. There is a wide difference on the second question. With the Calvinist, God dealt with the sinful race in the mode of election and reprobation—redeeming a part of mankind; with the Arminian, in the mode of a universal atonement. On this issue the truth is surely with the Arminian. But this gives him no logical right to shun the third question—the manner in which God might have dealt with the race. The Calvinist asserts that, as by the sin of Adam all men deserve an eternal penal doom, God might justly exclude a part from the grace of redemption. If we hold the Adamic sinfulness in which that position is grounded we must meet the issue at this point. To answer that God has not so dealt with the race is to evade the question; and there is no escape in this mode. The doctrine of a common Adamic sin, with the desert of an eternal penal doom, binds us to its logical implications. To say that God could not justly inflict this penalty on all mankind is to impeach his justice in the common amenability which is maintained. If the universal execution of the penalty would be unjust, the universal sentence of condemnation would be unjust. The imposition of an unjust condemnation is as contrary to the divine equity as the infliction of undeserved punishment.

The doctrine maintained in previous citations from Arminian theologians means that the offspring of Adam, simply on account of his sin, and without any personal fault of their own, might justly be doomed to an eternal penal death. It means that, previous to the common justification in Christ, all are under this condemnation, and might justly suffer the infliction of this penal doom. “Calvinists are now ashamed of consigning infants to the torments of hell: they begin to extend their election to them all.”<sup>1</sup> Fletcher said this more than a hundred years ago. Yet Fletcher himself maintained a doctrine of original sin which means the desert of such a doom; and many Arminians in his succession have done the same. If the infliction of such a doom would deeply offend one's sensibilities, why should not the doctrine of its just desert equally offend one's moral reason? If Calvinists are ashamed of the doctrine of infant damnation, it seems quite

<sup>1</sup> Fletcher: Works, vol. i, p. 284.

time that Arminians were ashamed of the doctrine of a universal infant desert of damnation.

The Arminian doctrine of a universal justification in Christ, so far from disproving this sense of infant guilt, strongly affirms it. If this justification is a reality, as it is uniformly held to be, then the guilt of original sin must also be a reality. In the order of facts the guilt must precede its cancellation. In the previous citations we have seen that both are held to be realities, and that the innocence of childhood is not its natural birthright, but the result of its justification from the guilt of original sin. Thus the one is set over against the other; and each is held to interpret the other. "*As by one man's disobedience many were made (or constituted, both in fact and by imputation) sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous. . . .* In whatever sense the redemption was an act external to the race and for its benefit, the fall was external to the successive generations of mankind and for their condemnation. Here it is obvious, or ought to be obvious, that the condemnation and the life are correlatives: the judgment is the opposite of the *reign in life* as the result of *abundance of grace*." "There are two aspects of Christ's redeeming intervention, one absolutely universal and one particular. As to the former, in whatsoever sense the race of man died in Adam it lives again in Christ."<sup>1</sup> Thus a real justification of the race in Christ means a real condemnation and guilt of the race on account of the sin of Adam; and, conversely, a real condemnation in Adam means a real justification in Christ as the cancellation of the common Adamic sin. Thus the justification which is held to cancel the common guilt of original sin means the prior reality of this guilt, with its amenability to the penal doom of sin, and that such is the natural state of all infants.

4. *Doctrinal Confusion and Contradiction.*—The Arminian theologians who hold the stronger view of original sin do not adhere to their own doctrine, but depart from it in a manner which involves confusion and contradiction. This appears in their persistent insistence that the universal justification shall be recognized as a part of their doctrine, and in constantly setting forth this justification as the vindication of the divine economy in the universal Adamic guilt and condemnation. But no justly imposed guilt or penalty can need any such vindication; and the constant setting it forth not only betrays serious doubt of the consistency of a common Adamic sin with the divine justice, but really means its inconsistency.

<sup>1</sup> Pope: *Christian Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 48, 49; vol. iii, p. 435.

Such are the implications in the maintenance of the position that, without the universal atonement in Christ, God could not have permitted the propagation of the race, and for the reason of its native sinfulness. This is so familiar a fact that references are quite needless. We cite a single instance: "No race unredeemed, and without hope of redemption, could in the universe of a holy God continue to propagate its generations."<sup>1</sup> If the doctrine of original sin be true in the sense in which we have found it maintained, there could be no hinderance in the divine justice to such propagation, because no one would suffer any undeserved penal doom. The denial of the propagation of the race, except under an economy of universal redemption, is a part of the argument to clear the divine justice of all reason of impeachment in the matter of original sin. There can be no reason for this defense, except with the consent that original sin, with its penalty, is in itself an injustice. This again is a departure from the doctrine maintained, with the result of confusion and contradiction. Such, too, is the implication of another point frequently made: that any evil which we may suffer through the sin of Adam is entirely consistent with the divine justice, if an equal good is conferred or attainable through the redemption in Christ.<sup>2</sup> The principle of compensation is of value in respect to providential suffering, but is irrelevant and valueless in the present question. If the penalties of original sin are in themselves consistent with the divine justice no compensatory provision is needed for their vindication; if inconsistent, no such provision can justify them. Only by a departure from the asserted doctrine of original sin, and with the concession of its injustice, can such a vindication be consistently attempted.

There is an open tendency to drop eternal death from the penalties of original sin, and to limit the common amenability to the two forms of spiritual and physical death. This has actually been done, and in some instances by those who have openly affirmed the common amenability to the penalty of eternal death on account of the sin of Adam. In opposition to that view the point is definitely made that actual personal sinning is the only ground of such penalty.<sup>3</sup> The most serious aspect of

IMPLICATIONS.

QUALIFYING  
THE PENALTY  
OF ORIGINAL  
SIN.

<sup>1</sup> Pope: *Christian Theology*, vol. ii, p. 296.

<sup>2</sup> Wesley: *Works*, vol. v, p. 589; Watson: *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, pp. 57, 60.

<sup>3</sup> Wesley: *Works*, vol. v, pp. 556, 577; Watson: *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, pp. 397-400; Pope: *Christian Theology*, vol. ii, p. 59; vol. iii, p. 437; Curry: *Fragments*, pp. 164, 165.

the doctrine is thus discarded, but at the cost of consistency, and in some instances with the consequence of self-contradiction.

With the two forms of penal death, the principle remains, that all may justly be punished for a sin in the commission of which they had no agency, or for a corruption of nature in the origin of which they had no part. This is the real perplexity of the question. Nor is there any rational solution, nor relief even, in the dismissal of eternal death as a penalty of Adamic sin. “The force of the reasons brought against imputing Adam’s sin to his posterity (if there be any force in them) lies in this, that Adam and his posterity are not *one*. But this lies as properly against charging a *part* of the guilt as the whole. For Adam’s posterity, by not being the same with him, had no more hand in a *little* of what was done than in the whole. They were as absolutely free from being concerned in that act *partly* as they were *wholly*. And there is no reason to be brought why one man’s sin cannot be justly reckoned to another’s account who was not then in being, in the *whole* of it, but what will as properly lie against its being reckoned to him in any *part*, so as that he should be subject to any condemnation or punishment on that account. If those reasons are good, all the *difference* there can be is this, that to bring a *great* punishment on infants for Adam’s sin is a *great* act of injustice, and to bring a comparatively small punishment is a *smaller* act of injustice, but not, that this is not *as truly and demonstrably* an act of injustice as the other.”<sup>1</sup> This reasoning is conclusive of our own position, and none the less so because Ed-

wards aimed at the support of his own strong doctrine of original sin. “We hold this to be a solid and unanswerable argument; and we hold also that God can no more commit a small act of injustice than a great one. Hence, in the eye of *reason* there is no medium between rejecting the whole of the imputation of Adam’s sin, and ceasing to object against the imputation of the whole of it as inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God. We may arbitrarily wipe out a portion of it in order to relieve our *imagination*; but this brings no relief to the calm and passionless reason. It may still the wild tumults of emotion, but it cannot silence the voice of the intellect.”<sup>2</sup>

WATSON. Watson makes the same point, and really with the same aim as Edwards. Having asserted, and supported by argument, the common amenability to the penalty of eternal death on account of the sin of Adam, he says: “The justice of this is objected to, a point which will be immediately considered; but it is now sufficient

<sup>1</sup> Edwards: Works, vol. ii, pp. 494, 495.

<sup>2</sup> Bledsoe: *Theodicy*, p. 260.



to say that if the making the descendants of Adam liable to eternal death, because of his offense, be unjust, the infliction of temporal death is so also, the duration of the punishment making no difference in the simple question of justice. If punishment, whether of *loss* or of *pain*, be unjust, its measure and duration may be a greater or a less injustice; but it is unjust in every degree."<sup>1</sup>

The reasoning in the above citations is thoroughly valid and conclusive. Nor do the Scriptures allow any such distinction between temporal and eternal penalties, or THE REASON-  
ING VALID. make any exception in case of the latter. But no Arminian can abide by the whole doctrine; for it is contradictory to all the ruling principles of his system. A doctrine which means that an infant of the thousandth generation from Adam might for his sin be justly doomed to an eternal penal death THE CONTRA-  
DICTION OF  
ARMINIANISM. is too heavy a load for the Arminian faith. Calvinism itself no longer attempts to bear this burden. Indeed, the Arminian retreat is no surprise. Instances appear in previous citations and references. First, in treating original sin simply in view of the Adamic connection of the race, a common amenability to the penalty of eternal death on account of Adam's sin is openly asserted and maintained; then in treating the question in other relations, that amenability is just as openly denied and controverted.

We may instance the case of Mr. Watson; certainly not for the purpose of pointing out his inconsistency as an end, CONFUSION OF  
DOCTRINE. but rather as a means of showing that the doctrine of original sin which he maintained must lead any Arminian into doctrinal confusion and contradiction. We have seen that he asserted, and supported by argument, the common amenability to the penalty of eternal death on account of the sin of Adam. Again we have seen him discarding this position, and asserting that actual personal sinning is the only ground of such amenability. Then, in controverting the doctrine of reprobation in its sublapsarian form, which maintains that, as for the sin of Adam all men are justly amenable to the penalty of eternal death, therefore in the election of grace God might omit a part and justly leave them to their deserved doom, Mr. Watson says: "In whatever light the subject be viewed, no fault, in any right construction, can be chargeable upon the persons so punished, or, as we may rather say, *destroyed*, since punishment supposes a judicial proceeding, which this act cuts short. For either the reprobates are destroyed for a pure reason of sovereignty, without any reference to their sinfulness, and thus all criminality is left out of the consideration; or they are destroyed for the sin of Adam,

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 55.

to which they were never consenting, or for personal faults resulting from a corruption of nature which they brought into the world with them, and which God wills not to correct, and they have no power to correct themselves. Every received notion of justice is thus violated.”<sup>1</sup> That this passage is openly contradictory to the doctrine of original sin maintained by Watson is manifest; yet it is thoroughly Arminian and presents views to which every Arminian must come in maintaining the ruling principles of his own system against the opposing tenets of Calvinism.

In the way of further illustration we may instance the case of Fletcher. In moral support of his doctrine of original sin he cites from the Homily on the Nativity: “Thus, in Adam, all men became universally mortal, having in themselves nothing but everlasting damnation of body and soul.” There is nothing in the citation which is not in his own doctrine. Yet as an Arminian he very naturally, and very properly as well, appends a note: “Prejudiced persons, who, instead of considering the entire system of truth, run away with a part detached from the whole, will be offended here, as if our Church (of England) ‘damned every body.’ But the candid reader will easily observe that, instead of dooming any one to destruction, she only declares that the Saviour finds all men in a state of condemnation and misery, where they would eternally remain were it not for the compassionate equity of our gracious God, which does not permit him to sentence to a consciousness of eternal torment any one of his creatures for a sin of which they never were personally guilty, and of which, consequently, they can never have any consciousness.”<sup>2</sup> Yet a common amenability to the penalty of eternal death on account of the sin of Adam is in the doctrine of original sin which Fletcher maintains; in the Homily on the Nativity from which he cites in its moral support; and in the passage just now cited from himself. But in this same passage such common amenability is really denied, and denied on the ground of the divine equity; for equity is still equity, though qualified as compassionate. That the divine equity could not permit the eternal punishment of any one simply on the ground of so alien a sin as Adam’s, must mean that such a doom would be unjust. But if the infliction of such a penalty would be unjust, there could be no just amenability to its infliction, and, therefore, no amenability at all. Thus there is doctrinal confusion and contradiction; a very sure result in any case where it is attempted to carry the Augustinian doctrine of native demerit into the Arminian system.

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, vol. iii, p. 256.

# INDEX.

	PAGE		PAGE
<b>A</b>			
Abelard, view of atonement.....	ii, 126	Apollinaris, Christology of.....	ii, 49
Ability, natural.....	ii, 288	Apologetics, effective work of....	i, 34
Acceptilation, as related to atone- ment.....	ii, 163	Aquinas, conservation a creation..	i, 316
Adoption, and sonship.....	ii, 337	Argyll, antiquity of man.....	i, 370
Advent, the second, doctrine of..	ii, 440	Arianism, the Christology of; di- vinity of the Son denied.....	ii, 48
theory of a figurative advent....	441	hence, the divine incarnation; the Christology false.....	49
premillennial theory; concomi- tants of the advent.....	443	Aristotle, definition of God.....	i, 59
objections to the premillennial view; the better economy.....	446	Arius, and Arianism.....	ii, 48
Agnosticism, denial of divine per- sonality.....	i, 137	Arminius, definition of sin.....	i, 528
the infinite of agnosticism.....	139	a common Adamic sin.....	ii, 505
no such infinite.....	142	justification of all in Christ....	512
a mere bulk infinite.....	143	Assurance, of sonship; the mental state.....	ii, 339
the true infinite.....	144	truth of assurance.....	340
God the true infinite.....	147	sources of assurance.....	341
the infinite truly knowable....	151	witness of the Spirit.....	342
Amyraut, theory of atonement....	ii, 217	a direct witness.....	344
Anderson, truth regenerative....	ii, 335	manner of the witnessing.....	347
Andrews, antiquity of man.....	i, 365	witness of our own spirit; nat- ure of the testimony; illustra- tions.....	348
Angels, unknown to science.....	i, 289	process of the witnessing; assur- ance subjectively one.....	350
known only in Scripture.....	290	variable in degree.....	351
creation of; realities of exist- ence.....	ii, 490	thoroughly valid.....	352
with personal endowments.....	491	Athanasius, need of atonement...	ii, 165
the good angels.....	493	Atheism, skeptical or dogmatic...	i, 110
ministries of.....	494	concerning the dogmatic; nega- tions of.....	111
evil angels; the evil one.....	497	no reply to theistic proofs; no account of the cosmos.....	112
Anselm, ontological argument....	i, 73	no proof of itself.....	113
theory of atonement.....	ii, 107	Atonement, definition of.....	ii, 68
Anthropological argument, prin- ciples of; organic completeness of man.....	i, 97	reality of: witnessing facts....	70
spirituality of mind.....	98	witnessing terms.....	79
mental powers.....	102	necessity of: in the sense of Scripture.....	89
moral powers.....	103	in moral government.....	90
provisions for knowledge.....	104	theories of; earlier views.....	106
the sensibilities.....	105	scientific treatment; doctrine of Anselm.....	107
proofs of a moral nature in God.	106	many theories; scientific enu- meration.....	109
Anthropology, doctrines of.....	i, 353	ground for only two.....	112
cardinal in theology.....	354	leading theories.....	123
Antitheism, determining facts of; antitheistic theories.....	i, 110	sufficiency of.....	195
Apollinarianism, Christology of; de- nies to Christ a human soul; grounded in trichotomy.....	ii, 49	objections to.....	203
denies the true incarnation....	50		

	PAGE		PAGE
a salvation for man only; broader relations of.....	ii, 208	great facts of the salvation severally conditional.....	ii, 252
a practical lesson for all intelligences.....	209	Bengel, originatione creation.....	i, 286
significance of the lordship of Christ.....	211	Bennett, power of Christian faith.....	ii, 429
moral grandeur of the atonement.....	214	Bentley, scope of atonement.....	i, 393
extent of, determined by the divine pleasure.....	219	Bernard, possible modes of salvation.....	ii, 165
pleasure of the Father.....	222	Blackstone, end of punishment... ..	ii, 174
pleasure of the Son; testimony of the Scriptures.....	225	Blasphemy, against the Holy Ghost.....	ii, 437
fallacies in defense of limitation.....	232	Bledsoe, merit and demerit only from personal conduct.....	i, 412
Attributes, of God; peculiarities of classification.....	i, 174	change in our Seventh Article... ..	525
artificial classifications.....	175	nature of the atonement.....	ii, 168
personality the true ground of classification.....	177	on native demerit.....	522
the attributes given in personality.....	178	Blessedness, future, heaven the place of; sense of place.....	ii, 472
Augustine, conservation a creation.....	i, 316	location of heaven.....	473
		beauty of the place; elements of blessedness.....	474
<b>B</b>		Bloomfield, prescience and pre-termination... ..	ii, 262
Baird, a generic human nature... ..	i, 477	Boston, method of theology.....	i, 51
Baptism, meaning of the rite.....	ii, 395	Bowen, theism underlies reason... ..	i, 71
relation to justification; the sign of regeneration; mode of administration.....	396	rational order of nature.....	87
original words; classical use of; biblical use.....	397	divine sensibility.....	198
ceremonial purifications.....	398	Brentz, Christological school of... ..	ii, 56
baptism of the Spirit.....	399	Brewster, Sir David, relations of the atonement.....	i, 393
the baptisms of John.....	400	Brown, cause and effect.....	i, 78
baptism of our Lord; baptisms on the day of Pentecost.....	402	Bruce, view of Nestorianism.....	ii, 51
baptism of the Ethiopian; of Saul of Tarsus.....	403	types of kenoticism.....	59
other instances; subjects of baptism: the truly regenerate.....	404	divine wisdom in redemption... ..	213
infants proper subjects: the Abrahamic covenant.....	405	Buchanan, antitheistic skepticism... ..	i, 122
blessings of; rights of infants to.....	406	Buffon, doctrine of species.....	i, 371
one church in two forms; infants a right to baptism.....	407	Bull, the Son manifest as Jehovah creative work of Christ.....	i, 245 252
relation of to the Church.....	408	Bunsen, origin of Indian tribes... ..	i, 383
ground of rights; instances of household baptism.....	409	Burge, theory of atonement.....	ii, 160
historical view of infant baptism.....	410	Bush, theory of the resurrection... ..	ii, 452
Baur, Grotian theory of atonement.....	ii, 161	Bushnell, theory of atonement... ..	ii, 115
Baxter, doctrine of atonement... ..	ii, 217	Butler, supremacy of conscience... ..	i, 107
Bellarmin, original righteousness... ..	i, 419	uniformity of divine agency... ..	324
Benefits, immediate, of atonement: the present life.....	ii, 241	meaning of natural.....	332
gracious help for all.....	242	<b>C</b>	
capacity for moral probation... ..	246	Caird, value of doctrine.....	i, 49
infant salvation.....	247	religious idea in idolatry.....	58
conditional benefits.....	248	personality the perfection of God.....	151
salvation conditional.....	249	Calderwood, true idea of the infinite.....	i, 145
Scripture testimony.....	250	Calixtus, method of theology.....	i, 51
		Calvin, favors the term reprobation.....	ii, 264
		Camero, a new theory of atonement.....	ii, 217
		Campbell, atonement by vicarious repentance.....	ii, 113
		Candlish, limited atonement.....	ii, 229
		Christ, substitute of the elect... ..	235
		Cappellus, disciple of Camero... ..	ii, 217
		Cause, intuitive idea of.....	i, 76
		Cave, theories of atonement.....	ii, 109
		Celsus, applauds Zeno.....	ii, 455
		Chalmers, systemization of theology.....	i, 51

	PAGE		PAGE
phenomena of conscience.....	i, 108	Clarke, Adam, on Adam naming the animals.....	i, 405
Genesis and geology.....	300	the serpent in the temptation...	429
depravity of human nature....	445	Clarke, James Freeman, great religions.....	i, 58
responsibility for native dispositions.....	ii, 282	Clarke, Samuel, the ontological argument.....	i, 75
witness of the Spirit.....	344	Clement, man in the image and likeness of God.....	i, 406
Chemnitz, Christological school of.....	ii, 56	Cocceius, method of theology.....	i, 51
Chevreul, theory of species.....	i, 371	Cocker, God as unconditioned.....	i, 118
Choice, mental facts of.....	ii, 283	providential conservation.....	315
usual analysis of the facts; vital part omitted.....	281	divine agency in providence....	322
a complete analysis.....	286	Comte, positivism.....	i, 118
the facts conclusive of freedom.....	287	Confessions, doctrinal value of; not a source of theology.....	i, 12
freedom of choice.....	288	Conscience, reality of; supreme authority of.....	i, 107
a true freedom.....	306	the pacification of.....	ii, 158
Choosing as we please, as a formula of freedom; aim of the doctrine.....	ii, 280	Consciousness, the Christian.....	i, 18
a nullity for freedom; consistent with determining inclination...	281	the higher view of.....	19
indifferent whence or what the inclination.....	282	variations of; law of variations.....	20
Christ, theanthropic; his natures ever dual.....	ii, 23	not a source of theology.....	21
communion of attributes in his personality; no communication of attributes; truth of a theanthropic personality.....	24	Cook, the atonement.....	ii, 181
the meaning of the creeds; the result of the incarnation.....	25	Cosmogony, the Mosaic.....	i, 298
a necessity to atonement.....	26	literal sense of narrative.....	299
the interpretation of Christological facts.....	27	theories of consistency with science.....	300
Christlieb, the Trinity.....	i, 269	theory of two creations; of a modern, local creation.....	301
Christology, scope of; the person of Christ.....	ii, 3	difficulties of the theory.....	302
importance of a true doctrine....	4	Mosaic days of creation.....	303
an early subject of study.....	5	six days and the Sabbath.....	304
differences of doctrine; the Chalcedonian symbol.....	6	consistency of Genesis and geology.....	305
no better construction of the doctrine; the formula given.....	7	Cosmological argument, the principle of causation.....	i, 76
contents of.....	8	dependence of the cosmos.....	80
Constantinopolitan additions; the additions really Nestorian.....	9	God the only sufficient cause of.....	81
elements of the doctrine: a divine nature; a human nature...	10	Cousin, movement of philosophic thought.....	i, 16
personal oneness.....	12	mysticism.....	17
in two natures.....	13	only ground of punishment....	ii, 173
errors in Christology.....	45	Crawford, theories of atonement..	ii, 109
Chronology, biblical.....	i, 359	limited atonement.....	235
Chrysostom, God incomprehensible	i, 153	Creation, the work of.....	i, 276
Chubb, on the prodigal son.....	ii, 104	question of, threefold.....	277
Church, the, primary idea of; the Christian idea.....	ii, 385	respecting creation of matter...	278
various applications of the term; denominational Churches.....	386	on a <i>priori</i> ground.....	279
specific idea; origin of the Church organizing forces.....	387	on cosmological ground.....	281
laity and ministry.....	415	on teleological ground; on scientific ground.....	282
ecclesiastical polity.....	416	biblical words of creation.....	283
Church membership, duty of.....	ii, 388	more direct Scripture proofs...	285
		several spheres of creation....	286
		the physical cosmos; living orders	287
		man, a distinct order.....	288
		angels, the creation of.....	289
		mystery of creation; familiar with the formative.....	291
		mystery of the originitive.....	292

	PAGE		PAGE
the principle, <i>ex nihilo nihil fit</i> ; no absolute quantity of being . . .	i, 293	demerit of depravity, theory of . . .	i, 510
divine agency in creation personal and free . . . . .	295	demerit of a mere nature . . . . .	516
Creationism, respecting the origin of human souls . . . . .	i, 490	an indefinable sin . . . . .	518
Cremer, words of creation . . . . .	i, 283	depravity without demerit . . . . .	521
Criticism, the higher, right and wrong of . . . . .	i, 42	Des Cartes, the ontological argu- ment . . . . .	i, 74
Cunningham, depravity a penal in- fliction . . . . .	i, 466	Devil, the, the evil one . . . . .	ii, 497
federal headship of Adam . . . . .	494	apostasy of . . . . .	498
Curry, substitution and justifica- tion . . . . .	ii, 135	the devil and his angels . . . . .	502
Cuvier, definition of species . . . . .	i, 371	evil work of . . . . .	503
Cyprian, God incomprehensible . . .	i, 153	their final overthrow . . . . .	504
Cyril, opponent of Nestorianism . . .	ii, 51	Dick, no guilt in the redeemed . . .	ii, 151
<b>D</b>			
Dana, no link between ape and man geology and Genesis . . . . .	i, 132 307	Diman, idea of a first cause . . . . .	i, 82
Dannbauer, method of theology . . .	i, 51	reality of moral law . . . . .	108
Darwin, adaptations in nature . . . .	i, 91	Dorner, doctrine of infallibility . . .	i, 16
Dawson, Genesis and geology . . . . .	i, 307	development of the Lutheran Christology . . . . .	ii, 56
antiquity of man . . . . .	363	existence of evil spirits . . . . .	502
Day, motive moves the will . . . . .	ii, 277	Drew, germ theory of the resurrec- tion . . . . .	ii, 452
Decrees, of God . . . . .	ii, 254	Drummond, biogenesis . . . . .	ii, 328
eternal; absolute; efficacious; alleged proofs of . . . . .	255	Dwight, probation implies the pos- sibility of falling . . . . .	i, 434
decrees efficacious and permis- sive . . . . .	256	only one source of depravity . . . .	462
as related to freedom; the ground of foreknowledge . . . . .	257	<b>E</b>	
perplexing questions; sinful deeds foreknown . . . . .	258	Ebionism, several sects of; Chris- tology of . . . . .	ii, 45
decrees without reason . . . . .	265	Ebrard, type of Christology . . . . .	ii, 59
illustrative statement . . . . .	266	Edwards, conservation as contin- uous creation . . . . .	i, 316
Deism, the English . . . . .	i, 43	an evil tendency in man . . . . .	453
distinction from theism . . . . .	57	definition of freedom . . . . .	ii, 272
Delitzsch, creation of matter . . . . .	i, 284	motive determines the will . . . . .	277
narrative of the creation . . . . .	300	defense of native demerit . . . . .	522
Demoniacs, veritable instances . . . .	ii, 499	Edwards, the younger, doctrine of atonement . . . . .	ii, 160
number and character of . . . . .	500	moral necessity consistent with responsibility . . . . .	282
no proof of present cases . . . . .	501	Eichhorn, Mosaic cosmogony . . . . .	i, 300
Depravity, of human nature; mani- fest in its activities . . . . .	i, 442	Election, doctrine of; instances of; election of the Jews . . . . .	ii, 260
not distinctively in the will; in the sensuous and moral nature of evil tendency . . . . .	443 445	special texts . . . . .	261
a native state; proofs of from Scripture . . . . .	446	election of the Gentiles . . . . .	262
from actual sin . . . . .	451	no absolute election to salvation	263
from sundry facts . . . . .	457	<b>F</b>	
Adamic origin of . . . . .	462	Faith, place of in theology; rational ground of . . . . .	i, 37
ground of . . . . .	465	necessary to science . . . . .	38
realistic and representative views	466	common element of; distinctions of . . . . .	ii, 321
view of genetic transmission . . . .	467	as intellectual; practical; fidu- ciary; nature of justifying faith . .	322
speculative theories . . . . .	468	the personal act of trust . . . . .	323
law of production in kind . . . . .	505	harmony of Paul and James . . . .	324
the law of native depravity . . . . .	506	Fall, of man; instrument of the temptation . . . . .	i, 429
the sense of Scripture . . . . .	507	agency of the devil; manner of the temptation . . . . .	430
		mental movement of Eve; the	

	PAGE		PAGE
case of Adam; penalty of disobedience . . . . .	i, 431	no atheistic heathen tribes . . . . .	i, 65
consequence to the race . . . . .	432	a necessary idea . . . . .	68
freedom of man in falling . . . . .	433	God, in being; attribute and being	i, 159
permission of the fall . . . . .	436	spirituality of being . . . . .	161
Federal headship, of Adam; legal oneness of the race in him; immediate imputation of his sin to the race . . . . .	i, 493	immutability of being; question of infinity of being . . . . .	164
sense of the imputation . . . . .	494	Government, moral, reality of; requisites of . . . . .	ii, 90
no transfer of demerit; no ground of guilt in representation . . . . .	495	equity of . . . . .	462
instances of attainer; biblical instances of imputation . . . . .	497	Governmental theory, of atonement; substitutional atonement . . . . .	ii, 155
proof texts considered . . . . .	498	substitution in suffering, not in punishment; the value the same; the sacrifice the same . . . . .	156
no such headship of Adam . . . . .	501	the divine love the same . . . . .	157
Fichte, definition of God . . . . .	i, 59	the Grotian theory . . . . .	159
Fisher, the idea of cause . . . . .	i, 76	the true Arminian theory . . . . .	165
the Spinozan pantheism . . . . .	114	answers to the real necessity for atonement . . . . .	176
Fisk, guilt of depravity not imputed . . . . .	i, 526	grounded in the deepest necessity . . . . .	177
Fletcher, man in a fallen state . . . . .	i, 451	gives the true sense of satisfaction; interprets the terms of the divine wrath . . . . .	184
gracious help for all . . . . .	ii, 245	of the divine righteousness; of atonement . . . . .	186
Christian perfection . . . . .	375	of atoning suffering . . . . .	187
a common Adamic sin . . . . .	ii, 506	is true to Scripture facts: guilt of redeemed sinners . . . . .	190
justification of all in Christ . . . . .	513	forgiveness of sin in justification; grace of forgiveness . . . . .	192
Flint, no atheistic tribes . . . . .	i, 66	universality of atonement . . . . .	193
pretensions of positivism . . . . .	118	Gracious help for all . . . . .	ii, 242
Fonseca, distinctions of divine knowledge . . . . .	i, 188	Gray, doctrine of species . . . . .	i, 371
Foster, John, atheistic pretension	i, 113	variations of species . . . . .	374
Foster, R. S., certainty of religious experience . . . . .	i, 35	Green, biblical chronology . . . . .	i, 360
the ontological argument . . . . .	76	Griffin, theory of atonement . . . . .	ii, 160
concerning sin in believers . . . . .	ii, 359	Grotius, eminent in scholarship . . . . .	ii, 160
Freedom, true question of; not the freedom of things; nor of external action . . . . .	ii, 271	doctrine of atonement . . . . .	161
nor of the will . . . . .	272	Grove, structure of matter unknown	i, 281
but of personal agency . . . . .	273	Guyot, harmony of Genesis and geology . . . . .	i, 307
importance of the question: in psychology; in ethics . . . . .	274		
in theology . . . . .	275	<b>H</b>	
Fuller, method of theology . . . . .	i, 51	Hades, the underworld . . . . .	ii, 430
<b>G</b>		Hagenbach, man the image of God	i, 406
Gabler, Mosaic cosmogony . . . . .	i, 300	Hamilton, principle of causation . . . . .	i, 77
Gerhart, source of the Lutheran Christology . . . . .	ii, 55	doctrine of the absolute . . . . .	139
Gess, type of kenoticism . . . . .	ii, 59	the infinite unknowable . . . . .	151
Gilbert, problem of Christ's suffering . . . . .	ii, 205	highest religious consecration . . . . .	152
Gnosticism, high pretensions of; various schools of . . . . .	ii, 46	no originaive creation . . . . .	292
at work in apostolic times; perverting principles of; false Christology of . . . . .	47	Harris, science broader than empiricism . . . . .	i, 23
God, definitions of . . . . .	i, 59	theism underlies reason . . . . .	71
sources of the idea of . . . . .	61	Hase, method of theology . . . . .	i, 51
an intuition of the moral reason; atheism no disproof of . . . . .	64	Heaven, place of future blessedness; the sense of place . . . . .	ii, 472
		location of heaven . . . . .	473
		beauty of the place; elements of blessedness . . . . .	474
		completeness of blessedness . . . . .	475

	PAGE		PAGE
Hegel, definition of God.....	i, 59	Inability, moral.....	ii, 266
the infinite must include evil.....	140	Incarnation, the divine.....	ii, 14
Herbert, Lord, English deism.....	i, 43	of the personal Son; relation of	
Herbert, T. M., striking adaptations	i, 91	to the person of Christ.....	ii, 17
Herschel, atoms manufactured articles.....	i, 281	Infants, relation of to the Church;	
Hilgard, antiquity of man.....	i, 365	respecting infant regeneration..	ii, 408
Hill, terms of redemption.....	ii, 86	a right to baptism; ground of..	409
middle theory of atonement....	121	Inspiration, of the Scriptures: distinction of inspiration and revelation; of inspiration and the Scriptures.....	ii, 479
atonement sufficient for all.....	220	agency of the Spirit in inspiration	480
Hitchcock, C. H., harmony of Genesis and geology.....	i, 306	a threefold operation.....	481
Hodge, A. A., penal satisfaction a necessity of justice.....	ii, 144	theories of inspiration.....	482
atonement sufficient for all.....	220	dynamical theory, sense of; sufficient for a revelation.....	486
Hodge, Charles, immediate imputation of sin.....	i, 494	inspiration a fact of Scripture; not a credential of the sacred writers.....	487
moral character untransferable.	495	value of inspiration.....	488
federal headship of Adam.....	501	Instinct, nature of.....	i, 95
justice must punish sin.....	ii, 143	Intermediate state, doctrine of;	
penal obligation transferable...	145	question of an intermediate place; sheol and hades.....	ii, 430
pecuniary and penal satisfaction result the same in both.....	151	a higher place for the good; view of the Church.....	431
view of the rectoral theory.....	174	a state of conscious existence; the sense of Scripture.....	432
only the elect redeemed.....	235	objections considered.....	434
the divine decrees.....	255	not probationary: silence of Scripture; clear sense of.....	435
ministries of angels.....	496	respecting the heathen.....	436
Holden, Adam naming the animals.....	i, 404	not a purgatorial state.....	438
Holiness, of God; holiness and righteousness.....	i, 199	Irenæus, man in the image and likeness of God.....	i, 406
moral feeling in.....	200	Irresistibility, of saving grace;	
necessary to holy action.....	201	serious perplexities.....	ii, 267
holiness in Adam.....	409	respecting the reprobate; the pleasure of God in calling men..	268
not strictly ethical.....	410	Issues, doctrinal, between Calvinism and Arminianism.....	ii, 254
a holiness of his nature.....	412		
proofs of.....	414	<b>J</b>	
elements of.....	418	Janet, teleology in nature.....	i, 90
Holyoake, secularism.....	i, 122	deviations in organic nature....	93
Hooker, Scripture and theology... ..	i, 1	useless and rudimentary organs.	94
orderly course of nature.....	324	finality in nature.....	103
the divine incarnation.....	ii, 21	ground of order in nature.....	323
three views of the Supper.....	411	Jenkyn, the commercial atonement	ii, 200
Hopkins, moral intuitions.....	i, 63	Jennings, all guilty of Adam's sin	ii, 506
Horsley, narrative of the creation	i, 395	Josephus, Jewish belief in the resurrection.....	ii, 431
Humboldt, common origin of races	i, 383	defense of the doctrine against the Greeks.....	451
Hume, the idea of cause.....	i, 77	Jouffroy, pantheism.....	i, 116
Hurst, rationalism.....	i, 45	Judgment, the; future.....	ii, 458
Huxley, no proof of abiogenesis... ..	i, 129	after the resurrection; general..	459
fossil man.....	132	objections considered.....	460
antiquity of man.....	361	manner of.....	461
<b>I</b>		Jussieu, view of species.....	i, 371
Idolatry, the origin of.....	i, 58	Justice, of God.....	i, 201
Immortality, of mind, proof of, from spirituality.....	ii, 426		
divine purpose of.....	427		
the view of Scripture.....	429		
Immutability, of God.....	i, 221		
Imputation, immediate, of sin... ..	i, 493		
of faith for righteousness.....	ii, 319		



	PAGE
the office of.....	i, 202
distinctions of justice: commutative; distributive; public.....	ii, 139
public justice, as related to atonement.....	169
divine justice in moral government.....	170
only ground of its penalties.....	171
end of penalties.....	172
remissibility of penalties.....	175
place for atonement; its nature determined.....	176
Justification, importance of a true doctrine.....	ii, 308
viewed as forensic.....	309
vital fact of forgiveness.....	310
use of forensic terms.....	311
a change of legal status.....	312
ground of justification: in Socinianism; in Romanism.....	313
in Calvinism.....	314
in Arminianism.....	317
condition of justification.....	318
<b>K</b>	
Kant, definition of God.....	i, 60
the ontological argument.....	75
universality of conscience.....	108
Keil, matter a creation.....	i, 284
narrative of the creation.....	300
Kenotic Christology, the doctrine..	ii, 59
no ground in Scripture.....	60
aim of kenoticism.....	61
implications of the doctrine....	62
Kitto, words of creation.....	i, 283
Klaproth, affinity of languages....	i, 382
Knapp, element of time in tradition.....	i, 13
imputation of Adam's sin on hypothetical ground.....	471
Krauth, development of the Lutheran Christology.....	ii, 55
Krug, definition of God.....	i, 60
<b>L</b>	
Laity, priesthood of.....	ii, 415
Language, only one original.....	i, 366
time for many.....	367
Legge, ancient Chinese religion...	i, 68
Leo X., respecting Huss and Jerome	ii, 456
Lewis, narrative of creation.....	i, 299
Leydecker, method of theology....	i, 51
Liddon, pantheism.....	i, 117
generation of the Son.....	237
Life, reality of; mystery of.....	i, 325
Lightfoot, Christ in the form of God	ii, 15
Linnaeus, definition of species....	i, 371
Locke, a light of nature.....	i, 8
Lotze, on definition of God.....	i, 59
Love, of God, necessary to the idea of God.....	i, 204

	PAGE
ethical goodness only with love; evidences of divine love.....	i, 205
Lowrey, eradication of evil tendencies.....	ii, 364
holiness as the capacity.....	377
Lubbock, atheistic tribes.....	i, 66
antiquity of man.....	361
Lucian, power of Christian faith..	ii, 429
Lucretius, from nothing, nothing..	i, 292
Luther, Christology of.....	ii, 56
the substitution of Christ.....	119
Lutheran Christology, relation of to consubstantiation.....	ii, 55
doctrinal differences.....	56
confessional statements.....	57
refutation of the doctrine; assumed impossibilities.....	58
Lyell, antiquity of man.....	i, 361

**M**

Macaulay, concerning a providence in the destruction of the Armada.....	i, 346
Macdonald, consistency of Genesis and geology.....	i, 306
Macknight, reconciliation.....	ii, 82
Magee, origination of a language..	i, 405
sins of ignorance.....	ii, 80
Man, time of his origin.....	i, 358
biblical chronology.....	359
claim of a higher antiquity.....	361
alleged proofs: historical.....	362
archaeological; geological.....	363
lingual.....	365
racial.....	368
the unity of man.....	370
racial distinctions.....	373
no disproof of unity.....	375
proofs of unity.....	377
physiological; psychological....	378
absence of hybridity.....	379
comparative philology.....	382
the sense of Scripture.....	383
the question in theology.....	389
primitive man: Mosaic narrative of; literal sense of.....	394
creation of man.....	397
mind distinctive of man.....	398
physiological constitution; intellectual grade.....	403
no supernatural insight.....	405
in the divine likeness.....	406
facts of the likeness.....	407
Mansel, doctrine of the absolute..	i, 140
sources of Gnosticism.....	ii, 46
Martensen, Romish doctrine of tradition.....	i, 14
method of theology.....	51
moral law over personal agency..	328
Martineau, true idea of the infinite.....	i, 115

	PAGE		PAGE
Matter, as we know it, inadequate to evolution; demand for a new definition.....	i, 100	Motives, necessary to choice.....	ii, 288
mental powers not from matter.....	101	power over motives.....	296
nor the moral powers.....	103	sufficient motives for required choices.....	302
materialism unprovable.....	ii, 423	power of commanding the requisite motives.....	304
strait of materialism; no account of mental facts.....	424	Mozley, moral intuitions.....	i, 63
Maxey, theory of atonement.....	ii, 160	idea of causation.....	78
Maxwell, character of the molecule	i, 281	Müller, Julius, malformations.....	i, 93
McCabe, foreknowledge of God...	i, 181	original sin.....	445
difficult subject of holiness.....	ii, 359	Müller, Max, no atheistic tribes...	i, 67
meaning of holiness.....	376	Aryan religion; bud of the Lord's prayer.....	68
McCausland, pre-adamites.....	i, 385		
McCosh, idea of God as infinite...	i, 148	<b>N</b>	
view of providence.....	330	Nazarius, possibilities of salvation	ii, 165
Means, of grace; Christian fellowship; churchly watchcare; the word of God.....	ii, 389	Necessity, moral.....	ii, 266
prayer.....	390	theoretical forms of necessity:	
the sacraments.....	392	fatalism; materialism.....	275
Melanchthon, doctrine of original sin cardinal in theology.....	i, 354	pantheism; predestination; domination of motive.....	276
nature of original sin.....	445	Nestorianism, Christology of.....	ii, 51
Merrill, perfection and maturity...	ii, 375	disproof of.....	52
Mill, mysticism.....	i, 16	Nestorius.....	ii, 51
cause of the cosmos.....	82	Newcomb, all science empirical...	i, 23
evil in relation to theism.....	205	Nitzsch, theological method.....	i, 53
Miller, man the image of God...	i, 197	definition of God.....	60
Moses and geology.....	306	Nominalism, truth and error of..	i, 479
Milman, evil effects of the doctrine of native demerit.....	i, 532		
Mind, a spiritual essence.....	i, 98	<b>O</b>	
distinctive powers of.....	99	Occasionalism, doctrine of.....	i, 319
mental facts not from matter...	ii, 424	Omnipotence, power of the divine will.....	i, 211
truth of spirituality; certainty of mental facts; continuity of self-consciousness.....	425	agency in elective volitions....	212
no ground in materialism; view of Scripture.....	426	in executive volitions; omnipotence of will.....	213
Ministry, a distinct class; the divine call; a reasonable idea...	ii, 415	Omnipresence, of God.....	i, 217
fact of the call.....	416	erroneous view of; not a ubiquity in essence.....	218
Miracles, apologetic value of.....	i, 32	omnipresence through personal perfections; in personal agency not distinctively an attribute...	219 220
no antecedent presumption against; definition of.....	33	Omniscience, an immediate and eternal knowing; prescient of all futurities; doctrine of divine nescience.....	i, 180
Mivart, no ape family specially anthropoid.....	i, 133	testimony of the Scriptures....	185
Molina, distinctions of divine knowledge.....	i, 188	prescience in the prophecies ...	187
Monergism, in regeneration.....	ii, 336	distinctions of divine knowledge: <i>scientia Dei necessaria; scientia Dei libera; scientia Dei media</i> ...	188
Moral influence, theory of atonement.....	ii, 125	omniscience and the divine personality.....	189
the Socinian theory.....	126	Ontological argument, Anselm's...	i, 73
truth of moral influence.....	127	Des Cartes's.....	74
refutation of the theory.....	129	Clarke's.....	75
not a theory of atonement.....	132	Kant's.....	75
Morell, movement of philosophic thought.....	i, 16	estimates of its value.....	76
view of conservation as continuous creation.....	321	Origen, man in the image and likeness of God.....	i, 406

	PAGE		PAGE
Original sin, formula of; no prescriptive authority; in need of analysis . . . . .	i, 441	Pope, Alexander, denial of a providence . . . . .	i, 347
distinct questions of doctrine . . . . .	442	Pope, W. B., scope of theology . . . . .	i, 2
Arminian treatment of; a common Adamic sin . . . . .	ii, 505	the divine holiness . . . . .	200
canceled by free grace . . . . .	512	universal Adamic sin . . . . .	ii, 509
Calvinistic claim of concession; denial of the claim . . . . .	515	depravity truly sin . . . . .	511
real point of the issue . . . . .	517	the condemnation removed . . . . .	514
Arminian defense not on the real point . . . . .	518	no ground of reprobation . . . . .	516
doctrinal confusion and contradiction the result . . . . .	520	native guilt . . . . .	520
Owen, all sinned in Adam . . . . .	i, 489	Porter, theism underlies reason . . . . .	i, 71
substitution in identical penalty . . . . .	ii, 136	Positivism, of Comte . . . . .	i, 117
limited atonement . . . . .	235	a pretentious system; a shallow philosophy . . . . .	118
		law of the three states . . . . .	119
		classification of the sciences . . . . .	120
		a new religion; intrinsically atheistic . . . . .	121
		Prayer, the privilege of . . . . .	i, 339
		requisites of . . . . .	ii, 390
		elements of its power: fervency of mind; help of the Spirit . . . . .	394
		the intercession of Christ . . . . .	392
		Pre-adamites, theories of . . . . .	i, 385
		claim of Scripture ground . . . . .	386
		the question in ethnology . . . . .	388
		in Christian doctrine . . . . .	389
		Predestination, doctrine of . . . . .	ii, 260
		Predicables, divine, eternity . . . . .	i, 214
		unity . . . . .	216
		omnipresence . . . . .	217
		immutability . . . . .	221
		Pre-existence, of human souls . . . . .	i, 490
		Prieland, diversities of race . . . . .	i, 369
		unity of man . . . . .	379
		Probation, the primitive . . . . .	i, 423
		the testing law . . . . .	425
		suiited to the Adamic state . . . . .	426
		a favorable trial . . . . .	427
		no future probation . . . . .	ii, 435
		none for the heathen . . . . .	436
		Prophecy, apologetic value of . . . . .	i, 32
		Propitiation, meaning of; divine propitiousness; propitiation through Christ . . . . .	ii, 83
		Providence, the divine, a universal agency . . . . .	i, 309
		in the physical sphere . . . . .	311
		conservation of matter . . . . .	315
		viewed as continuous creation . . . . .	316
		question of physical forces . . . . .	318
		implications of their denial . . . . .	319
		ground of the uniformities of nature . . . . .	322
		providence in animate nature . . . . .	325
		the view of Scripture . . . . .	326
		in the realm of mind . . . . .	327
		personal agency dependent, yet free . . . . .	328
		providence in accord with . . . . .	329
		providence a truth of theism; of moral government . . . . .	334

	PAGE		PAGE
of the divine Fatherhood.....	i, 337	Renouf, Egyptian religion.....	i, 67
of the Scriptures.....	338	Repentance, necessary to salvation.	ii, 100
review of objections.....	341	possible only through redemptive	
Punishment, only ground of.....	ii, 171	grace.....	101
only for rectoral ends.....	172	not the ground of forgiveness..	102
true doctrine of.....	173	necessary to justifying faith...	323
future punishment: rational		Reprobation, doctrine of.....	ii, 263
proofs of.....	462	preterition; election implies	
Scripture proofs of.....	465	reprobation; contrary to justice.	264
eternity of.....	467	respecting actual sin; arbitrary	
no rationale of.....	468	election and reprobation.....	265
a question of revelation; clear		illustrative statement.....	266
sense of Scripture.....	469	Resurrection, the, literal sense of;	
the Catholic doctrine.....	470	false assumptions in proof of..	ii, 448
Purgatory, doctrine of; in the		explicit words of Christ; chapter	
hands of the Church; groundless.	ii, 438	of the resurrection.....	450
Pythagoras, the essence of reality.	i, 87	the germ theory; the Sweden-	
		borgian theory.....	452
		the resurrection body.....	453
		credibility of the resurrection;	
		apparent difficulties.....	454
		oneness of the resurrection ...	455
		Revelation, religious truth super-	
		naturally given.....	i, 31
		necessary supernatural attesta-	
		tion.....	32
		distinction from inspiration....	ii, 479
		Rogers, mediate imputation of	
		Adam's sin.....	i, 469
		Romang, truth of evil spirits.....	ii, 502
		Rothe, method of theology.....	i, 51
		Rouge, Egyptian religion.....	i, 67
		<b>S</b>	
		Sacraments, sense of the term. ...	ii, 392
		confessional statements; symbol-	
		ical character; sealing office....	393
		limitation of means; sacraments,	
		as means.....	394
		as symbols; as seals.....	395
		Saisset, determinations of being..	i, 150
		Sanctification; idea of holiness...	ii, 354
		ceremonial sanctification.....	355
		deeper moral sense; entire sanc-	
		tification.....	356
		sanctification of the nature....	357
		second-blessing view.....	368
		may be a gradual work.....	370
		the life in holiness.....	371
		portraiture of the life.....	372
		grades in graces; law of perfec-	
		tion in graces.....	377
		assurance of sanctification....	379
		a common privilege.....	382
		Satisfaction, theory of, in Calvin-	
		istic theology; formation of the	
		doctrine.....	ii, 133
		place in the "Federal Theol-	
		ogy;" complete substitution...	134
		concerning penal substitution..	135
		theories of the substitution....	136

	PAGE		PAGE
an absolute substitution.....	ii, 137	Smeaton, the substitution of Christ	ii, 134
punitive justice and satisfaction	139	Smith, Henry B., motives not efficient cause of choice.....	ii, 279
penal satisfaction a necessity of justice.....	141	Smith, John Pyc, definition of the atonement.....	ii, 184
impossible by substitution.....	142	Socinian Christology.....	ii, 54
the satisfaction necessary.....	143	false to the Scriptures.....	55
the substitution maintained.....	144	Socinus, Faustus, relation of to the Socinian system.....	ii, 54
no answer to the necessity.....	145	Socinus, Locius, Socinianism.....	ii, 54
the theory self-destructive; objections to the theory: the punishment of Christ.....	148	Sonship, of the Son.....	i, 232
redeemed sinners without guilt a limited atonement.....	149	lower sense of.....	233
Schaff, concerning a limited atonement.....	ii, 153	a divine Sonship; Scripture proofs of.....	235
Schemes of future blessedness without atonement.....	ii, 97	generation of the Son.....	237
Schlegel, common origin of races..	i, 383	guarded use of the term.....	238
Schleiermacher, the Christian consciousness.....	i, 19	Consubstantiality with the Father; subordination of.....	239
Science, necessary certitude.....	i, 22	Son of God, the, divinity of.....	i, 239
empirical, limitations of.....	23	proofs of: divine titles.....	240
possible only as knowledge may transcend experience.....	24	divine attributes.....	246
not possible without faith.....	38	divine works.....	250
Secularism, a skeptical atheism... i, 122		divine worshipfulness.....	254
a practical application of positivism; really atheistic.....	123	Sophocles, sin as sin-offering....	ii, 188
a propaganda; only evil for the people.....	124	Soteriology, atonement and salvation; their relation to Christ....	ii, 65
Semi-pelagianism, and trichotomy.	i, 400	South, greatness of Adam.....	i, 403
Sensibility, the divine; truth of... i, 194		Southall, recent origin of man....	i, 365
distinctions of.....	195	rapid formation of languages... 367	
rational sensibility; aesthetic... 196		Sovereignty of God, the, no reason for a limited atonement; an atonement itself the disproof of an absolute sovereignty....	ii, 222
moral.....	198	Species, definitive facts of.....	i, 370
distinctions of the moral: holiness.....	199	Spencer, religion an eternal fact..	i, 27
justice.....	201	the absolute impersonal.....	137
love.....	204	the first cause.....	141
mercy.....	209	Spinoza, definition of God.....	i, 60
truth.....	210	pantheism of.....	114
Shedd, depravity a penal infliction. i, 466		Spirit, the Holy, personality of... i, 257	
a generic human nature.....	474	personal agency of; personal associations.....	258
individuations of the nature... 483		personal facts.....	259
every man a <i>particeps criminis</i> with Adam.....	486	procession of the Spirit.....	260
justice must punish sin.....	ii, 144	divinity of; divine attributes... 262	
the redeemed without guilt.... 191		divine works.....	263
Sheol, the underworld.....	ii, 430	supreme worshipfulness.....	265
Sherlock, witness of the Spirit... ii, 344		Spirits, the, in prison.....	ii, 457
Shroeder van der Kolk, concerning manlike apes.....	i, 133	Stier, personality of the Son....	i, 248
Sin, definitions of.....	i, 527	Strong, A. H., systemization of theology.....	i, 51
the true definition.....	528	variations of race.....	375
in the regenerate; confessional statements.....	ii, 366	Strong, James, Mosaic cosmogony. i, 299	
view of Wesley.....	367	Stuart, originative creation.....	i, 286
evil tendency of the traditional doctrine.....	368	Substitution, use of the term; Scripture ground of.....	ii, 87
Sinning, the, of holy beings.....	i, 434	Summers, all one with Adam.....	ii, 512
Smalley, theory of atonement.....	ii, 160	a free justification in Christ.... 514	
		the life-giving second Adam.... 516	
		Supper, the, sacrament of; institution of; nature of.....	ii, 411

	PAGE		PAGE
the Lutheran doctrine; no real presence; only literal sense. . . .	ii, 412	historical; practical; systematic	i, 4
Papistical doctrine; assumed real presence . . . . .	413	definitive facts of the systematic relation of to other forms of theology . . . . .	6
no transubstantiation; true nature of the supper; factitious sacraments . . . . .	414	scientific basis of . . . . .	22
Swedenborgianism, theory of the resurrection . . . . .	ii, 452	grounds of the necessary certitude method of systemization . . . . .	51
Symington, no guilt in the redeemed secret and preceptive divine will	ii, 151 239	Theology, sources of . . . . .	i, 7
Sympathy, of Christ, through a law of common suffering . . . . .	ii, 30	the light of nature . . . . .	8
appropriated in the incarnation . . . . .	31	revelation the source . . . . .	11
a thorough appropriation . . . . .	32	mistaken sources: confessions . . . . .	12
manifest in his life . . . . .	33	tradition . . . . .	13
sufferings like our own . . . . .	34	mysticism . . . . .	16
deeper than a human consciousness; else, only a human sympathy . . . . .	36	the Christian consciousness . . . . .	18
limitations of the human . . . . .	37	Thomasius, method of theology . . . . .	i, 51
suffering in a theanthropic consciousness . . . . .	38	type of kenoticism . . . . .	ii, 59
divine consciousness of the human new facts of consciousness . . . . .	39 40	Tiele, no atheistic tribes . . . . .	i, 67
sacrifice of the Father; of the Son . . . . .	41	Tournefort, characteristics of species . . . . .	i, 371
real ground of sympathy . . . . .	42	Tradition, Romish doctrine of; not a source of theology . . . . .	i, 13
true personality of Christ . . . . .	43	Traducianism, respecting the origin of souls . . . . .	i, 490
Synergism, in regeneration . . . . .	ii, 336	Trendelenberg, finality . . . . .	i, 91
		Trichotomy, the doctrine of . . . . .	i, 398
		in Apollinarianism . . . . .	399
		in semi-Pelagianism . . . . .	400
		trichotomic texts; original words no light on regeneration . . . . .	ii, 328
		Trinity, the basal truth of the doctrine . . . . .	i, 223
		personal distinctions of Father; Son; and Holy Spirit . . . . .	224
		union of the three in divine unity; difficulties of the doctrine. incipency of the doctrine; treatment in the creeds . . . . .	226
		the Apostles'; the Nicene . . . . .	227
		the Athanasian . . . . .	228
		formulations of the doctrine, not a philosophy . . . . .	229
		the doctrine . . . . .	230
		resources of Christian thought and faith . . . . .	231
		proofs of the Trinity . . . . .	267
		mystery of the Trinity; above our reason; without analogies . . . . .	269
		mystery no valid objection; consistency of the constituent facts; a vital truth of Christianity . . . . .	271
		relation to the atonement . . . . .	272
		to the offices of the Holy Spirit. to the Christian life; to the deeper truths of Christianity . . . . .	274
		a philosophy of the Trinity for the Christian life . . . . .	275
		Truth, in God, as veracity . . . . .	i, 210
		as fidelity . . . . .	211
		Turretin, the redeemed without guilt . . . . .	ii, 151
		atonement sufficient for all . . . . .	220

### T

Taylor, Isaac, the headship of Christ . . . . .	ii, 215
Taylor, John, nature of atonement . . . . .	ii, 120
Taylor, N. W., view of the Trinity . . . . .	i, 230
Teleological argument; teleology manifest in human agency . . . . .	i, 86
equally in the orderly constitution of nature . . . . .	87
in the adaptation of nature . . . . .	89
higher adaptations than in human artifices . . . . .	91
objections considered: organic malformations . . . . .	92
useless and rudimentary organs. the working of instinct . . . . .	95
Teleology, meaning of . . . . .	i, 86
Terry, the Mosaic cosmogony . . . . .	i, 298
Tertullian, God incomprehensible . . . . .	i, 153
Theism, meaning of . . . . .	i, 57
Theodicy, endeavors toward its attainment . . . . .	i, 205
unattainable simply in the light of reason . . . . .	206
Theodore, author of Nestorianism . . . . .	ii, 51
Theodoret, propagator of Nestorianism . . . . .	ii, 51
Theology, definitions of; distinctions of, as natural . . . . .	i, 2
exegetical; biblical; dogmatic . . . . .	3

Tyndall, religious feelings as certain as physical facts . . . . . i, 27  
 objections to a providence . . . . . 344

**U**

Ueberweg, the ontological argument . . . . . i, 74  
 Ullman, means of the deepest penitence . . . . . ii, 101  
 Unity of God, meaning of . . . . . i, 216  
 not an attribute . . . . . 217  
 Ursinus, method of theology . . . . . i, 51

**V**

Van Oosterzee, confessions not a source of theology . . . . . i, 12  
 Vaughan, mysticism . . . . . i, 17  
 Virtues, natural, the fact of; need of . . . . . i, 456  
 source of; without true spirituality . . . . . 457  
 Vogt, definition of species . . . . . i, 371  
 Vrolik, ape-likeness to man . . . . . i, 133

**W**

Walker, God and the religious consciousness . . . . . i, 21  
 Wallace, man not of ape origin . . . . . i, 133  
 mind not an evolution . . . . . 134  
 antiquity of man . . . . . 361  
 Walton, two witnesses to sonship . . . . . ii, 343  
 Watson, proofs of depravity . . . . . i, 448  
 the covenant with Adam . . . . . 502  
 doctrine of atonement . . . . . ii, 166  
 natural virtues . . . . . 245  
 witness of the Spirit . . . . . 346  
 sacraments as seals . . . . . 393  
 common guilt of Adam's sin . . . . . 507  
 balancing grace in Christ . . . . . 513  
 no concession to Calvinism . . . . . 515  
 native demerit defended . . . . . 522  
 native demerit disputed . . . . . 523

Watts, federal headship of Adam . . . . . ii, 509  
 Wesley, mental powers of Adam . . . . . i, 403  
 divine permission of the fall . . . . . 438  
 change in our seventh article . . . . . 524  
 definition of sin . . . . . 528  
 gracious help for all . . . . . ii, 214  
 witnesses to our sonship . . . . . 343  
 view of sin in believers . . . . . 367  
 time of dying to sin . . . . . 370  
 holiness of life . . . . . 372  
 respecting sinless perfection . . . . . 373  
 all guilty of Adam's sin . . . . . 506  
 Whately, ecclesiastical polity . . . . . ii, 417  
 existence of the devil . . . . . 498  
 Whedon, primitive holiness . . . . . i, 412  
 depravity without demerit . . . . . 525  
 Christ the Saviour of infants . . . . . 529  
 substitutional atonement . . . . . ii, 167  
 Wiggers, sharers in all ancestral sins . . . . . i, 492  
 Winchell, Mosaic periods of creation . . . . . i, 307  
 pre-adamites . . . . . 385  
 Wisdom, of God . . . . . i, 193  
 Witsius, method of theology . . . . . i, 51  
 atonement sufficient for all . . . . . ii, 220  
 Wood, creative work of Christ . . . . . i, 252  
 Worcester, the atonement . . . . . ii, 103  
 Wuttke, man religiously constituted . . . . . i, 70

**Y**

Young, redemption by love . . . . . ii, 114  
 power of redeeming love . . . . . 129

**Z**

Zaleucus, atonement for his son . . . . . ii, 182  
 Zeno, derided the hope of a resurrection . . . . . ii, 455  
 Zinzendorf and kenoticism . . . . . ii, 59  
 sanctification complete in regeneration . . . . . 367















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